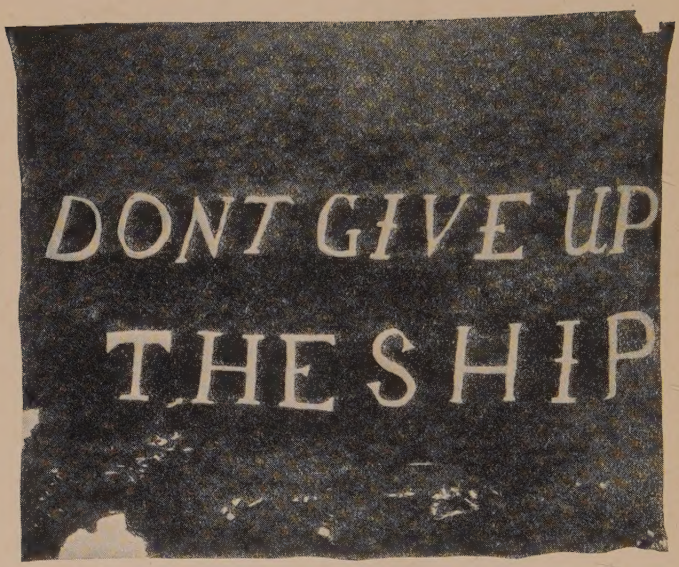
MAKERS OF NAVAL TRADITION

ALDEN AND EARLE

HUGHES

F. C. Schirrmacher



A MAKER OF TRADITION: THE FLAG THAT BROUGHT VICTORY AT THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE, 1813

MAKERS OF NAVAL TRADITION

BY

CARROLL STORRS ALDEN, PH.D.
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

AND

RALPH EARLE, D. SC.
CAPTAIN, UNITED STATES NAVY
REAR ADMIRAL AND CHIEF OF BUREAU OF ORDNANCE DURING THE WORLD WAR. PRESIDENT OF THE WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

GINN AND COMPANY
BOSTON · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · LONDON
ATLANTA · DALLAS · COLUMBUS · SAN FRANCISCO

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

831.12

The Athenæum Press
GINN AND COMPANY · PROPRIETORS · BOSTON · U.S.A.

NURTURE your mind with great thoughts. To believe in the heroic makes heroes. — DISRAELI

PREFACE

Notwithstanding the stress given in recent years to the necessity of organization, the personal element still counts. The greatness of the nation cannot be estimated merely in miles of railway or in production of oil and steel. Nor can the greatness of the navy be estimated merely in size of fleets or in tonnage and guns. In personnel, much more than in matériel, the present is closely linked with the past. Visitors to our national capital, gazing upon the shaft raised to our first President or standing before his home at Mount Vernon, feel an uplift from being near to the great soldier, constitutionalist, statesman. It is hoped that similarly many visiting the United States Naval Academy catch the spirit of the strong, resourceful officers whose eager, generous devotion to their ideal has been commemorated by the halls, the basin, the walks, and the fields that bear their names.

The authors of this volume have, in various capacities, been for many years vitally interested in the education of midshipmen at the Naval Academy. It is their hope that the youths studying to become officers will by means of this book be led to realize more fully their debt to the great men who have preceded them in the Service. But it is to others as well that our naval heroes should appeal. The United States Army and Navy potentially consist of all male citizens, and in an emergency unusual numbers have been called

upon to "support and defend the Constitution." Each of the great leaders of the navy has been guided by others who went before, and each in turn has stood to show the way to those who followed. Moreover, the prompt recognition of the leader, with the giving of enthusiastic, whole-hearted support, has been equally essential to every important cause. Our country has been blessed in the fact that those who carried aloft the flaming torch and passed it on have been men of high ideals and superior manhood; also in the fact that not only the navy but the great mass of citizens have claimed these makers of tradition as their own.

C.S.A.
R.E.

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

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MAKERS OF NAVAL TRADITION

CHAPTER I

THE NAVY AND TRADITION

EVERY great crisis through which the country has passed has brought to light unsuspected qualities. In the World War people were astonished to see the United States Navy grow within a year from 85,000 to 350,000, and seven months later to 532,000. Admirable, however, as was the organization which would permit such rapid expansion, still more significant was the spirit, the morale, which not only touched the mass but to a considerable degree permeated it. Young officers lately graduated from the Naval Academy, as well as those brought in from civil life, found that "Navy Spirit" was something deeper and farther reaching than they had supposed. Most of them made no attempt to define it; but as the first consciousness of it came upon them, they felt a new sense of power. It meant something to belong to the navy and to be an American.

Since American naval tradition is the subject which will engage our thought throughout this volume, in these first pages we shall attempt little more than to point out a few of the occasions on which it has come to notice. It is a quality hard to define. Like many of the best things in life, its value to those concerned consists not in defining but in feeling it.

History in which Napoleon or Nelson played a part reads like romance. The mere fact of either leader's being present gave assurance to the forces under his command that, no matter what the odds, victory would follow. Nor did the magic end there. Years later every officer and every man who had served under him believed himself to be of superior value for that reason; and results commonly justified this presumption.

Admiral Edward Hawke, who fought an exceptionally brilliant engagement at Quiberon Bay, is reputed to be the founder of British naval tradition. One of his captains, William Locker, gave Nelson his early training. In later years Nelson wrote, gratefully ascribing his success to him: "It was you who taught me, 'Lay a Frenchman close, and beat him.'"

In tracing further the development of the British tradition, Jervis must not be omitted, for it was he who, when Nelson was a young officer, took the chaotic and mutinous Royal Navy and introduced discipline and morale. Nelson served under him and built on the substantial foundation which he laid.

The personality of Nelson was impressed upon the Royal Navy as that of no one else, before or since, has been. The mutual confidence between him and his subordinates, whom he characterized as "a band of brothers," his impetuosity in engaging the enemy the instant he discovered them,—"Time," he said, "is everything; five minutes may spell the difference between victory and defeat,"—and his last signal flown at the beginning of Trafalgar, "England expects every man will do his duty," are as firmly grounded in the naval profession as if incorporated in law. If a plan of attack was felt to have "the Nelson touch," nothing else had to be said for it.

VICE ADMIRAL, LORD NELSON

From the painting by Hoppner

At the time when the genius of Nelson was first generally recognized, the *Constitution*, the *Constellation*, and their sister frigates were building, and the permanently established United States Navy came into existence. We were then but lately separated from the mother country, and the spirit of hostility had not altogether died out. Nevertheless the best model was followed; British discipline, regulations, and traditions were adopted for America. To the seafaring people who but recently had been English colonists these seemed their rightful heritage. And later no incongruity was felt in honoring the great Nelson by introducing in the American sailor's uniform, as worn today, three white stripes on the collar in recognition of Nelson's three great victories, and a black neckerchief, a badge of mourning for the dead admiral.

Already John Paul Jones had made a tradition for struggling America, when he engaged a frigate of the "invincible" Royal Navy on unequal terms and carried the fight through to victory. While Nelson was blockading or pursuing the French in the Mediterranean, Preble and Decatur, in the same sea, were accomplishing what had not been attempted before in war against the Barbary states. Macdonough, Hull, Lawrence, and David Porter, who took a minor part in that war, were to show their full power later in the War of 1812. Farragut, trained as a boy by David Porter and given three years' grim experience of war and fighting when he was thirteen or less, had his testing time in the greatest naval engagements of the Civil War. And Dewey, a young lieutenant under Farragut at New Orleans and Port Hudson, found his opportunity at Manila Bay, and won because in preparations and battle he was guided by the thought "What would Farragut do?"

This is only a fragment of the American tradition, but it is sufficient to show its continuity and vitality.

A few years ago several admirals and captains and also a group of college presidents were asked to name the naval officers who in their opinion had been the most distinguished. The following list represents their reply, and it has been carved on the amphitheater at Arlington: John Paul Jones, Thomas Truxtun, Edward Preble, Isaac Hull, Stephen Decatur, Oliver Hazard Perry, Thomas Macdonough, Charles Stewart, David Glasgow Farragut, David Dixon Porter, Andrew Hull Foote, John Lorimer Worden, George Dewey, and William Thomas Sampson.

This is an inspiring list, yet few who read it will be entirely satisfied. The truth is that the service of such officers as Barry, Biddle, Wickes, and Conyngham in the Revolution, Bainbridge, Lawrence, and David Porter in the War of 1812, and dozens of other officers of the same time or later was so important that any considerable number of persons interested in history would not entirely agree upon any selection which has been sharply restricted. Further, all fourteen in the list just given won distinction in war and fighting. What of those who rendered important service in other ways?

In the field of exploration it was a naval officer, Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, who discovered the Antarctic continent and explored the Samoan archipelago; and it was a civil engineer of the navy, though on leave of absence and without a naval crew, Commander Robert E. Peary, who discovered the north pole.

In diplomacy the service of Kearny, Matthew C. Perry, and Shufeldt in the Far East was of conspicuous excellence. Similarly in oceanography there was Maury; in ordnance development, Dahlgren; in sea-

manship, fleet organization, and naval education, Luce; and in naval history and strategy, Mahan. Thus many officers, not conspicuous in war, or not in war alone, have gained national distinction and have added breadth and depth to the great current of tradition.

This growth of American naval tradition is all included within a century and a half; within the lives of two men of not extraordinary age, provided that the second took up the position of observer when the first was ready to relinquish it.

"If we do not exalt our highest we are not worthy of them," remarked Admiral Henry C. Taylor (quoted by Admiral Gleaves). It is certainly true that an intimate knowledge of our great men and the absorption of the tradition they fostered is good for the youth of today. No small part of the education at the Naval Academy consists of the fact that the chapel, where officers and midshipmen assemble for divine service, contains in its crypt the remains of John Paul Jones; that the broad brick walk leading toward the Tripoli Monument, along which midshipmen of earlier years had their formation, bears the name of Decatur; that the gymnasium in which they seek to gain physical prowess is Macdonough Hall; that an ancient Japanese bell in the middle of the yard, according to custom rung by midshipmen only to celebrate an athletic victory over their friendly enemies of West Point, was a gift of Matthew Calbraith Perry; that the massive armory close by is Dahlgren Hall; that the athletic field looking out upon Chesapeake Bay where the academy football teams practice and play most of their games is Farragut Field; that the road on which the heads of the academic departments have their quarters is Porter Road; that the building to which midship-

men report for recitations and practical work in seamanship and navigation is Luce Hall; that the basin from which launches leave for visiting cruisers or battleships lying in the bay bears the name of Dewey; and that the three divisions of the academic group, where midshipmen go to the library or for recitations in mathematics, English, and physics, are known as Mahan Hall, Maury Hall, and Sampson Hall.

It would be a misfortune if midshipmen went through the four years' course of the Naval Academy and did not feel the significance of these names. The desire to guard against such a possibility originally prompted this book. Further, if the Naval Academy is rightly a source of inspiration, its influence should not be limited to the few, comparatively speaking. Thousands of visitors enter its gates every month, and it is to be hoped that they carry away with them something that makes for good citizenship. Our naval tradition is a common heritage.

"One of the best things about the American naval officer," wrote Lieutenant Lewis R. Freeman of the British Navy at the close of the World War, "and one that stands him in good stead at the present time, is his open-mindedness." Others have remarked on his daring, initiative, enthusiasm, endurance, and loyalty both to leaders and to followers. But these qualities of the officer are also common American traits. It should always be thus. If the navy is an institution worth while, it represents American character, and it is most truly national when it represents the best.

CHAPTER II

JOHN PAUL JONES (1747–1792)

THE "SEA DOGS" of old England, though odd in their speech and dress, were intensely national in feeling. The same characteristic has marked their American successors. The ship, whether traveling thousands of miles away or lying snugly anchored in a home port, carries the flag with her. Officers and sailors have traditionally been quick to resent an insult to their country, and on mere suspicion have begun many a personal combat. Because of their wandering life men in the navy have at home given less than ordinary attention to politics and to social and economic questions; but abroad they have championed American principles and institutions with great tenacity, "Made in America" being the only trade-mark required. Underneath this seeming superficiality of judgment, however, there has often been a sound idealism. The Service, perhaps because of their ignorance of details and the separateness of their lives, have seen the greatness of America at times more truly than others in the thick of affairs. If the navy, then, is national in its feeling, naval tradition should be considered not merely by itself but in its relation to national traditions and national history.

The American Navy came into existence at the beginning of the War of Independence, and tradition had its origin with Barry, Wickes, Conyngham, and es-

pecially with Jones. The navy was crude notwithstanding the greatness of certain men, but it was crude only as the whole government was crude.

Congress during the Revolution was not the legislative branch only but also the executive branch: it was everything of government that existed, beyond the governments of the individual states, yet during much of the time it governed in a hesitant and doubtful fashion. This was for two reasons: (1) it was not unified — no measures were passed except after much wrangling and by slender majorities; (2) it lacked the support of the thirteen states represented — usually it was without funds, and not infrequently delegates discovered that their constituencies would refuse to approve what they had voted. The revolutionary movement in its early stages was a radical movement (as most revolutions are), and the aristocracy of the learned professions and of culture and of wealth were opposed to it by a large majority. No single colony could hope for success, yet how could the colonies be brought together? They had different forms of government, different laws, different religious beliefs, and different manners. Franklin early commented on their jealousy, which he said was "so great that, however necessary a union of the colonies has long been for their common defense, . . . yet they have never been able to effect such a union among themselves." He concluded that they were more jealous of each other than they were of England. The Constitutional Congress had in its membership men of giant stature, and in spite of insuperable difficulties they adopted a bold tone and accomplished surprising results. It is important to note that they attempted to create and support a navy by establishing a Marine Committee, succeeded later by an Agent of

JOHN PAUL JONES

From an old print

Marine, thus furnishing the prototypes of the Navy Department and the Secretary of the Navy.

The Continental Congress, which found the navy a difficult problem, was equally perplexed in the matter of the army. There was the dread of military despotism founded on a standing army, a dread which has existed throughout our national history. In the campaign against Howe in 1777, though Congress authorized an army of eighty thousand, Washington never had more than eleven thousand, and these were but militia called out for a short period, with little or no training. Washington pleaded in vain for a military force of some permanence: "To place any dependence upon militia is assuredly resting on a broken staff," he declared. In the retreat from Long Island he had seen evidence of the discouragement and disaffection of militiamen when they had deserted "almost by whole regiments, by half ones, and by companies at a time." He wrote that he had no way of getting proper officers, for Congress would not put them on a permanent basis with pay in keeping with their rank. The battle of Saratoga showed what the Continental forces could do in a crisis, but the lack of discipline and loyalty continued even up to Yorktown and after. It is not too much to assert that if Washington had possessed from the first the enthusiastic support of all men in the colonies capable of bearing arms, he could have ended the war as early as Saratoga, and that too without the aid of the French military forces.

It was not strange then that the young Scotchman, John Paul Jones, on accepting a lieutenancy in the navy as war began was not favorably impressed. He perceived at once the lack of organization and discipline in the fleet of Esek Hopkins, who had been made com-

mander in chief by Congress. He could appreciate the absence of these qualities as many officers of higher rank could not, for he had served several years in the British Navy as midshipman, having gained an appointment through the good offices of the duke of Queensberry. Later he had rapidly risen in the British merchant service and finally had commanded his own ship.

This lack of organization existed notwithstanding the fact that the colonists had shown themselves resolute and able seamen from the very first settlements in America. In the long period when there were no roads, they would have been without the inestimable advantage gained from neighborly coöperation had they not been fearless and efficient in sailing both small and large craft. At the very first word of hostilities in the Revolution, O'Brien, taking a lumber sloop with a gang of woodsmen armed with axes and pitchforks, surprised and captured off Machias, Maine, a British armed schooner loaded with arms and munitions. Why should not men of such spirit, when a few ships had been equipped by Congress, quickly have produced an efficient navy? They did furnish privateers that swarmed the seas and preyed upon British commerce, but the men who sailed forth on the privateers were prompted not so much by the desire for liberty and the defense of their homes as by the prospect of immediate profits. It was largely the gambler's spirit; and the results, though often sensational, were disappointing from a national point of view. All the sailors in a seaport would sign up for a privateer; and when a regularly commissioned frigate or sloop of war sought a crew, there were no seamen to be found. Before the entrance of France into the war, American forces had

captured six hundred prizes; but meanwhile England had taken nine hundred American ships. This was because the privateers acted only as units and did not coöperate or follow any large plan. The "militia of the sea" was as futile as the militia of the land. Both undermined the spirit of the Service and made difficult any thoroughgoing organization and discipline.

If Congress and the Marine Committee could have recognized and promoted those officers who proved themselves worthy, the first step toward sound organization would have been taken.

For instance, there was Captain John Barry, whose mettle was well known. As commander of the frigate *Alliance*, returning from France, whither he had carried Franklin, he engaged two British ships of war. In the midst of the battle he was struck in the shoulder by grapeshot and carried below. One of his officers, hurrying to him with an appalling story of the shattered condition of the ship and the numbers killed and wounded, asked if he should not strike the colors.

"No," said the captain, in agony, but never more determined; "if you cannot fight the enemy, carry me on deck and I will."

His words, repeated to his men, inspired them to renew their efforts, and they captured both ships.

And there was Benedict Arnold, a brilliant young officer who might have been saved from his later course of shame had he been treated differently by his countrymen. In 1776 he carried on a vigorous campaign against the greatly superior force of Sir Guy Carleton; and though eventually he lost control of Lake Champlain, he delayed the British invasion of New York until the next summer, when the victory of Saratoga had become possible. And there were also Nicholas Biddle,

Gustavus Conyngham, Lambert Wickes, and Jones, all of whom showed great courage and ability. But none of them ever had more than a small command.

In the case of the army it was the rare good fortune of the young nation that upon the beginning of hostilities the great Virginian was made commander in chief, and that he was retained in this position to the end. If only the navy might have had like guidance! It is true Congress early assigned an officer to this post; but Esek Hopkins, who was chosen for it, though not without experience as a merchant captain, proved utterly unfit. The brother of Governor Hopkins of Rhode Island, he had the backing of the New England faction and was an influence for bad long after the Marine Committee had recognized his inefficiency. On appointment he was given a squadron of five ships. The command of one of these, the sloop of war *Providence*, and later that of the tiny ship *Fly*, was offered to Lieutenant John Paul Jones; but he refused each, preferring the billet of lieutenant on the flagship *Alfred*. He realized, as he modestly stated, that he was "imperfect in the duties of a Lieutenant." He thought that on the flagship, where he was associated with the highest officers, he should rapidly increase his professional knowledge. In this he was quickly undeceived.

It was Jones who, in the absence of his captain, directed the arming and manning of the flagship; and when the squadron had sailed to the Bahamas to capture military supplies at the capital, New Providence, it was the lieutenant again who made the expedition a success. Jones knew all the islands in the West Indies, and it was he who piloted the little fleet to a safe anchorage within the key and suggested the road by which the marines could march to the town and surprise the fort.

The rest of the cruise was inglorious, and a storm of criticism greeted the commander in chief on his return. When, a month later, the commanding officer of the *Providence* was convicted of cowardice and broken, Jones was not averse to accepting the sloop which was offered him. He was at this time commissioned captain. While Hopkins continued at anchor in the harbor of New London during the following months, Jones scoured the seas in the little *Providence*. First he convoyed some of Washington's troops from Rhode Island to New York. In the latter part of the summer of 1776 he sailed on a six weeks' cruise, harrying the commerce bound for the St. Lawrence and for Nova Scotia. It was a game not without excitement, for some of the British ships were strongly convoyed, and on more than one occasion Jones was chased by a frigate of twice his strength; but on his return to Rhode Island he had to his credit sixteen prizes, eight of which he manned and sent in, while the other eight he found it wiser to destroy. This was vastly more than all the rest of Hopkins's fleet had accomplished. Next he sailed in command of the frigate *Alfred*, accompanied by Captain Hacker in the *Providence*; and though handicapped by the inefficiency and cowardice of Captain Hacker, who slipped away from him in a fog and ran back to Newport, he captured, with other prizes, a large armed vessel with one thousand complete uniforms, intended for the forces of Generals Carleton and Burgoyne but destined instead to prove of great value to Washington's destitute army.

The Marine Committee, the leading spirit of which was Robert Morris, now convinced of Jones's ability, issued orders which virtually gave him command of the fleet, though Hopkins, in the harbor of New London,

still retained the position earlier assigned him. Unfortunately for Jones, he had already aroused Hopkins's jealousy. In consequence, when the orders came, Hopkins instantly sent out on extended cruises the only three ships available, and then when Jones appeared informed him that it was impossible to comply with the instructions of Congress. Communications were slow, and the Marine Committee was never prompt in enforcing its will. Though eventually Hopkins was relieved of his command and disgraced, Jones never received the ships promised. Shortly after this affair Washington was invested with the powers of a military dictator, for it was a time of great stress; but Jones, who had made such a brilliant beginning, was never given anything like a corresponding naval authority.

Instead Jones had the mortification of seeing officers who were his juniors and who had done practically nothing advanced above him. It was just such unfairness that demoralized the brilliant but ill-balanced Benedict Arnold. Jones, however, overcame feelings of disappointment and bitterness. Going to Philadelphia, where Congress was sitting, he appeared before the Marine Committee and placed his services unreservedly at their disposal.

In the existing chaos the navy required, first of all, organization; and Jones, recognizing the need, formulated some essential principles. Organization was his first great contribution to the Service. How clear was his vision is shown by a few extracts:

To Robert Morris (chairman of the Marine Committee), 10 February, 1777:

> It would give me much more pleasure could I Join with the other Commanders in Pointing out hints for Useful Rules and Regulations. . . . There are no Officers more im-

mediately wanted in the marine department than Commissioners of Dock Yards to Superintend the Building and Outfit of all Ships of war.... The Navy is in a wretched Condition. It wants a man of Abilities at its head who could bring on a Purgation and Distinguish between the Abilities of a Gentleman and those of a mere Sailor or Boatswain's Mate.... Unless some happy expedient can be fallen upon to induce the Seamen to Enter into the Service for a longer term than Twelve Months it will never be possible to bring them under proper Subordination.

To John Hancock (in "A Plan for the Regulation and Equipment of the Navy Drawn up at the Request of the Honorable the President of Congress"), April, 1777:

As the extent of the Continent is so great that the most advantageous Enterprise may be lost before Orders can arrive within the Eastern and Southern districts from the Board of Admiralty it will perhaps be expedient to appoint deputies for executing the office of High Admiral within these extreme districts, to continue in office only during Pleasure and at all times accountable to the Board of Admiralty.... It may also be expedient to establish an Academy at each Dockyard under proper Masters, who'es duty it should be to instruct the officers of the Fleet when in Port in the Principles and application of the mathematicks, Drawing, Fencing and other manly Arts and Accomplishments. It will be requisite that young Men serve a certain term in Quality of Midshipmen, or Masters mate before they are examined for promotion.

In one sense these recommendations, sound as they seem today, were useless; for the War of Independence was fought on to its conclusion in the same desultory, uncertain fashion, so far as the American Navy was concerned, during most of the six years. The struggling Congress established no rules and regulations

for the government of the navy, appointed no commissioners of dockyards nor admirals, and created no naval academy. However, within approximately three quarters of a century all these were to be adopted.

Robert Morris, having formed a high opinion of Jones's abilities, strengthened by personal friendship, determined to give him in Europe such an opportunity as had been denied him in America. There was a fine frigate building in Amsterdam under the direction of Silas Deane, American commissioner at Paris. This, it was proposed, Jones should command; and he was ordered to assemble his officers and men and sail to France. Again the jealousy and hostility of the Hopkins faction in New England, where he had to look for his complement, seriously embarrassed him; and the outcome was that he was compelled to delay departure for France until the *Ranger*, building at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, could be completed.

A thrill was to pass through Europe as well as America when Jones met the English, with odds against him, and won; but the desperate character of his struggle was occasioned not so much by the well-equipped and manned Royal Navy as by the jealousy of Hopkins and other officers, the absence of moral fiber in a large part of the crews he was forced to accept, the lack of support from Congress, and later the jealousy of the French admiralty and officers. The marvel is that he accomplished anything at all.

The complement that Jones secured for the *Ranger* were not of his own selection and were by no means the equals of those he had had on the *Providence* and the *Alfred*. Neither Simpson, his first lieutenant, nor Elijah Hall, his second lieutenant, had ever sailed before in a ship of war; and, much worse, when they arrived

in France, Simpson and others refused to obey orders when they learned that their cruise was to be more than a short one directed against merchant ships. Further, there was no fine new frigate waiting for Jones. The British ambassador at the Hague had heard of the plan for the frigate at Amsterdam; and his influence in Holland, then neutral, was so strong that Silas Deane sold the ship to France to prevent its confiscation.

But Jones did not yield to disappointment. On going to Paris he conceived an ardent admiration for the great Franklin, who more than any other individual was responsible for the alliance France was about to make with America; and Jones's feeling was returned. Also he made lasting friends of some of the highest French naval officers at Brest, Paris, and elsewhere. Undoubtedly stimulated by these men and ambitious to show himself deserving of their support, he determined on making in the little *Ranger* a cruise in British waters that should rival and surpass the exploits of Wickes and Conyngham. He reached his decision notwithstanding the fact that many of his men confessed "they had no turn for enterprise." In truth, on this cruise Jones was so constantly in danger of mutiny that, as he afterwards related, he allowed himself only short and irregular snatches of sleep until his return.

He sailed from Brest on 10 April, 1778, and, taking a prize between the Scilly Islands and Cape Clear, proceeded boldly north through St. George's Channel. A week later he was in Solway Firth, the same waters which he had gazed upon as a boy and which later he had sailed when commanding a merchant ship. Here he conceived the bold idea of raiding the harbor of Whitehaven and destroying its shipping. His men had so little liking for the project that he had great difficulty

in making up a party of thirty-one for the descent. At midnight they set out with two boats. Day was about to break when they reached the pier, but Jones fearlessly took upon himself the dangerous part of the task. As the shipping was commanded by a fort, he decided first to remove this obstacle and, climbing up on one of the men's shoulders, led the way through an embrasure. All was silent, for the sentinels were soundly asleep in the guardhouse. Having spiked the guns, Jones next made equally harmless the other fort in the vicinity. Then he rejoined the officers and men whose duty it was to set fire to the two hundred and more ships crowded in the harbor. This other force stupidly had done nothing at all, and in the end the only fire set was one which Jones lighted with his own hands. "The inhabitants now began to appear in thousands," Jones wrote. He held them back for a few minutes by the threat of his pistol, and then made good his retreat. A few hours later that same day, Jones sailed into Kirkcudbright Bay to St. Mary's Isle and attempted to capture the earl of Selkirk in his castle, thinking that he would be a hostage valuable for stimulating negotiations in the exchange of prisoners. This, like the previous enterprise, was without immediate results. At Whitehaven the people rushed in the moment Jones withdrew and so saved their ships, and at St. Mary's Isle the earl happened to be absent. But these raids alarmed the British and compelled them to give greater attention to the defense of their coasts.

A cautious man would now have sailed away in haste, for the country was aroused, and expresses were sent out in every direction. Jones, however, conceived the idea of capturing a sloop of war at Carrickfergus, on the Irish coast opposite, of which he had caught a

glimpse some days earlier when passing. He was planning to sail in to engage her when he learned that the sloop, which was the *Drake*, was coming out. "Alarm smokes now appeared in great abundance, extending along on both sides of the channel," Jones observed in his report. He let the *Drake* come up astern and within hail. Suddenly, and before the enemy realized his intention, he brought the *Ranger* about almost across the bows of the *Drake*, raking her decks with destructive broadsides, to which she could reply only with the few guns that bore. Jones wrote:

> The action was warm, close, and obstinate. It lasted an hour and four minutes, when the enemy called for quarter; her fore and main topsail yards being both cut away and down on the cap; the topgallant yard and mizzen gaff both hanging up and down along the mast; the second ensign, which they had hoisted, shot away and hanging in the water; the sails and rigging entirely cut to pieces, her masts and yards all wounded, and her hull very much galled.

Jones lost two killed and six wounded; the English, forty-two killed and wounded, and among their wounded were the captain and lieutenant, who both died a little later.

The *Drake*, though of about the same strength as the *Ranger*, had new officers and an inexperienced crew and was otherwise unprepared for battle. Jones, on the other hand, was handicapped by the miserable spirit of his command. In his own words, "Plunder rather than honor was the object of the *Ranger's* officers and crew." As he headed toward the *Drake* to give battle, his men were so near to open mutiny that, as he declared, "I ran every chance of being killed or thrown overboard." This statement was confirmed by Lieutenant

Meyer, a Swedish officer, who, having been granted a leave of absence, had entered the service of the United States and was detailed to the *Ranger*. It was plainly Jones who was responsible for the victory.

We have already noted organization as one of Jones's great contributions to the navy. The exploits just mentioned bring out his second contribution of daring and enterprise. These are doubtful virtues except as they are based on sound strategy and tactics. That Jones gave them this high character is yet clearer after considering his victory over the *Serapis*.

England at once recognized in Jones her most formidable enemy on the sea. Insurance rates went up; and terror spread throughout the land, resulting in the establishment of camps for militia everywhere. English newspapers commonly spoke of Jones as a pirate. Nevertheless, American prisoners, who previously had been closely confined as felons, were now given a new status, and soon were subject to exchange.

Enthusiastic praise from the French greeted Jones on his return, but the embarrassments which ever beset him in his naval career by no means came to an end. Two of the three American commissioners in Paris, Arthur Lee and John Adams, strangely enough were indifferent and at times hostile. Jones's draft on them for money to feed his crew and prisoners was not honored, and in his emergency he had to borrow on his personal credit. It was only the hearty commendation and never-failing sympathy of the other commissioner, Franklin, which saved Jones in the immediate irritation and the long disappointment that followed.

France had now openly allied herself with the United States in war upon England. And Jones, who was flattered by every French officer he met, not excluding

M. de Sartine, Minister of Marine, was promised a large ship. Thereupon he sent home the *Ranger* with the insubordinate Lieutenant Simpson.

For nine months he waited for the oft-promised new command; and when he had received the wretched old tub finally given him, he spent another six months in securing her equipment. Such delay was scarcely less than agony for this Harry Hotspur of the sea. Morbidly sensitive, he was cut to the quick by the strange attitude of the American commissioners and found it impossible to understand the double dealing of the French court.

The story goes that it was "Poor Richard's Almanac" that gained him a ship; for when he had written letter after letter while waiting in Brest and L'Orient, put off by one promise after another, he was impressed by one of Franklin's maxims, "If you would have your business done, go yourself." Acting upon the suggestion, he went to Paris and was given a most favorable reception by M. de Sartine, as well as by Franklin and other Americans. He secured as his command the East India merchantman, the *Duras*. She was not new and never designed as a ship of war; but she was so much better than no ship at all that in gratitude to Franklin and the famous character of the "Almanac," Jones rechristened her the *Bonhomme Richard*.

The ship was twelve years old, and plainly her service had worn severely on her; her timbers, which lacked the thickness and strength required for a frigate, were described as "half rotten." Jones traveled over much of France to secure a proper armament for his converted frigate, and finally had to accept many cannon which had been condemned by the French government. He had equal difficulty in obtaining officers and crew.

Of her complement of three hundred and eighty, only about one fifth were American, largely exchanged prisoners, among them his one efficient officer, Richard Dale; there were one hundred and thirty-seven French marines with two officers provided by the French government; and the rest were Portuguese, Swedes, Malays, and even some English prisoners — not a crowd that took kindly to the discipline and exact obedience required for a ship of war. On this cruise Jones was to have associated with the *Richard* four other ships — the *Alliance*, the *Pallas*, the *Cerf*, and the *Vengeance*. The *Alliance* was a new American frigate and, though not so large as the *Bonhomme Richard*, was, as appeared later, of greater strength. This squadron would have given Jones a force of no mean size if only he could have commanded it. In the first place, Pierre Landais, the captain of the *Alliance*, was a former French officer who had been cashiered in his own service; Congress had given him the command out of regard for America's ally without looking into his record. He was jealous of Jones and, being thoroughly erratic (his best friends later doubted his sanity), was insubordinate and troublesome at every turn. In the second place, just as the squadron was about to sail, M. de Chaumont, the personal representative of the Minister of Marine, a well-intending though blundering friend of Jones, appeared with a "concordat" to govern the squadron. This virtually took from Jones his position as commander in chief; for according to the agreement which he was compelled to make with the other captains unless he was to delay sailing, each was left free to obey or not obey Jones's orders according to his discretion. Earlier Jones had hoped that Lafayette would accompany him with a

land force. Lafayette had become a warm friend of Jones's and had enthusiastically volunteered for the expedition with a plan no less bold than that of laying the great port of Liverpool under contribution. But one of the French officers had talked indiscreetly, and the government blocked the scheme on the ground that Lafayette must be reserved for other service. Even more of a loss than the strong armed force Lafayette would have brought was the moral support he would have lent.

At sunrise, on 14 August, 1779, Jones sailed from L'Orient with his motley force. To Franklin he wrote characteristically, "I look forward with flattering expectation and an ardent desire to merit your friendship and that of America." His course was to southern Ireland, then north along the west coast of Ireland and Scotland to the Orkneys, in the end completely encircling the British Isles. Off Cape Clear, Ireland, nine days out, Jones lost his barge, which was taken by deserters, who made for land. He also lost his third lieutenant, who, in his zeal to capture the deserters, acted without orders and set out with a boat and twenty American sailors. They got lost in a fog and eventually were captured by the British. To cap the climax, the *Cerf*, sent to find and rescue the third lieutenant's boat, showed that she had no liking for the adventurous cruise by using the opportunity to return to France. As has already been suggested, Landais in the *Alliance* constantly made trouble, openly insulting the commodore; indeed, the only course of action that could safely be predicted of him was that he would oppose any plan of Jones's which required coöperation. Twice during the cruise he sailed away and was not seen by the other ships for days. Nevertheless Jones

persevered and took many prizes. Even with his reduced force he entered the Firth of Forth, planning to lay Leith and Edinburgh under contribution; but the wind changed and became so violent that he had to withdraw. Following this, the commanding officers of the *Pallas* and the *Vengeance*, the only ships still with the *Bonhomme Richard*, fearful lest the British should bring an overwhelming force against them, declared to Jones that they were going to end the cruise by sailing to the Texel. In his perplexity Jones thought of continuing the cruise unsupported. He hated to end it without striking a blow at the rich Baltic fleet, a plan which months previously he had discussed with Franklin.

This fleet, consisting of forty-one sail, he sighted off Flamborough Head on the 23d of September, 1779, about one o'clock. They were convoyed and preceded by the frigate *Serapis* and the sloop of war *Countess of Scarborough*. Jones, who now had the *Alliance* with him again, promptly signaled to his squadron to form in line of battle and engage the enemy. The *Pallas* and the *Vengeance* obeyed, taking a position in the lee of the *Richard*, which in time brought them up with the *Countess of Scarborough*; but Landais, in the *Alliance*, sailed off to windward to await developments.

The wind was light; and so slow was the old *Richard* that it was not until seven o'clock, when daylight was ended, that she came within hail of the *Serapis*. Both ships at this time were sailing in a northwesterly direction, the *Richard* slightly in advance. Jones, to bring the ships as near together as possible, delayed to the last minute beginning the action, even using the ruse of pretending that he did not understand the hail. He had seen that the *Serapis* could sail two feet to the

Richard's one, and recognized that his chance for victory lay in fighting at close quarters where there would be no maneuvering. The period of waiting terminated with an exchange of broadsides, both ships firing at the same moment. This first discharge on the *Richard*, delivered by her 18-pounders, her heaviest guns, mounted on the gun deck, came near to deciding the issue right then and there. Two of these old condemned cannon burst, killing nearly every man of their crews, besides blowing a hole in the side of the ship and wrecking that part of the main deck which was above them. The odds, which had previously been fifty guns on the *Serapis* to forty-two on the *Richard*, were now greatly increased; the crew of the *Serapis*, made up entirely of Englishmen, contrasted sharply with the *Richard's* polyglot aggregation; and the *Serapis*, a strongly built frigate, new and on her first commission, in every feature surpassed the slow, worn-out East Indiaman.

Jones then attempted, by backing his topsails, to drop astern of the enemy, where he might get the advantage of a raking position, which commonly more than doubled the effect of a broadside, besides denying the enemy the opportunity of replying with any except the stern chasers. But Captain Richard Pearson, who commanded the *Serapis*, took advantage of his speed to gain for himself the coveted position, and inflicted heavy losses. Pearson then ran ahead, with the idea of crossing the bows of the *Richard* and raking her again; but, miscalculating his distance, he came near to being fouled by her and prevented this only by putting his helm hard alee, a maneuver that brought the *Serapis* just ahead of the *Richard*. At this point Jones showed his superior seamanship and quick-wittedness.

As Pearson, reducing his speed, was attempting to come alongside his enemy, Jones forged ahead, blanketing the sails of the *Serapis*, which was to leeward and enveloped in smoke. When the latter again felt the breeze and followed hard after, Jones put his helm quickly over; and before his opponent had detected the sudden change of course, according to Jones's report, "The enemy's bowsprit . . . came over the *Bonhomme Richard's* poop by the mizzenmast." This was just what Jones had wanted, and he exclaimed, "Well done, my brave lads, we have got her now." Calling for a hawser, he sprang like a tiger upon his prey; and when the officer with him, attempting to tie a knot, fumbled, he himself took the line and made fast the enemy's jib stay to the mizzenmast of the *Richard*. The bowsprit of the *Serapis* broke short as the wind struck her after-sails and swung her about; but the lashing held fast, and the remainder of the battle was fought with the starboard bow of the *Serapis* against the starboard quarter of the *Richard*, the two lying so close alongside that muzzles of the guns touched their enemy's side and yards interlocked.

The battle had been in progress one hour. Just before the fouling, the *Richard* must have seemed a beaten ship even to Jones. The hole in her starboard quarter, caused by the explosion of her own guns and made larger by the heavy bombardment of the *Serapis*, was so huge that the captain's barge—if he had not lost it—could easily have been hauled through. On the main deck the 12-pounders and 9-pounders had been silenced, and on the high poop the French marines had suffered so many losses that the French officer in command took the sad rèmnants down to the quarter-deck. Yet Jones now believed he was going to win.

The purser, in charge of the few guns on the quarter-deck, being wounded, Jones took his place and himself directed their fire. They consisted of two 9-pounders, made three by bringing over a gun from the unengaged side. These were the only guns the *Richard* had still in action. At this point Lieutenant Dale brought up the force of Americans and French marines who had been serving the guns below. Jones then bent every effort to secure control above. Marksmen in the *Richard's* tops, being heavily reënforced, were now silencing the enemy's musket men and driving the British from the guns on the quarter-deck and forecastle. Nor did they stop until they had entirely cleared the enemy's decks. Before this advantage had been gained, the contest was all but lost by the carpenter, who, seeing a pump of the *Richard* disabled, spread the report that the American frigate was sinking. With the master at arms and the gunner, he rushed up to surrender. "What scoundrels are those?" cried the indomitable Jones. Suiting his action to the words, he threw both pistols at the head of the gunner, who had attempted to haul down the flag, felling him as he fled down the gangway. Pearson, however, had heard their cry for quarter and, calling out to Jones, asked if he had struck.

"I have not yet begun to fight," Jones thundered back, in a flash voicing the unconquerable spirit that has characterized the American Navy ever since.

Pearson thereupon assembled a party with the intention of boarding the *Richard*. His men could easily have swarmed through the open side of their enemy and, overpowering the force below, have set fire to or sunk the ship. But this was not the conventional mode of boarding, and it seems never to have occurred to Pearson. As, instead, the British made their rush

above, they were subject to the fire of the French and American marksmen and were met by a picked force led by Jones in person. They retreated in disorder.

Five hundred frenzied English prisoners on the *Richard*, released by the master at arms, who had told them that the ship was sinking, came rushing up. But Jones assured them that it was the *Serapis* which was sinking, and that their safety depended on keeping the *Richard* afloat. With this he not only forced them back but induced them to man the pumps. All quietly returned except one, the captain of a merchantman earlier made a prize by the *Richard*. This individual, climbing through a gun port and on to the *Serapis*, told Pearson of the desperate plight of his enemy. Whereupon Pearson ordered all his men below decks, and, with the expectation that the *Richard* must soon surrender, urged on the crews stationed at the large guns. Their shot, however, were absolutely wasted; for as the relative position of the ships had not changed since the time of fouling, the missiles fired by the *Serapis* passed clear through the *Richard's* hull, encountering no resistance. Both ships were now burning in many places.

The British on the *Serapis* not only were menaced by fire but were shown by a Yankee sailor that their strong hull did not afford the full protection they had supposed. This daring fellow climbed from the rigging of the *Richard* to the main yard of the *Serapis* and, dropping a hand grenade down an open hatchway, set fire to some loose powder and a line of cartridges on the main deck. In the terrific flash and explosion that followed, twenty of the officers and crew of the *Serapis* were blown to pieces.

Landais, in the *Alliance*, had joined the fray once before, but had deliberately fired a broadside into the

stern of the *Richard*. The bright moon gave little possibility of his mistaking the high poop and other peculiar marks of the East Indiaman. Further, her identity was indicated by three lanterns hung as agreed upon; and men from the *Richard*, hailing, called out that the gunners of the *Alliance* were killing their own countrymen. The crazy Landais, however, continued to fire other volleys into the *Richard's* side and bow and then sailed away. Later—it was after the explosion of the cartridges in the *Serapis*—the *Alliance* again appeared. This time she sailed about the exhausted but still struggling combatants, firing grapeshot indiscriminately into both. The British had no knowledge of the harm that the *Alliance* was doing to their enemy and were seized by a panic. Jones, sensitive to everything, instantly noted that the British fire was lessening and urged his men to increase their own. This led to the end. At half-past ten, after an engagement lasting three hours and a half, the British surrendered. It was Pearson himself who hauled down the colors. No one else would venture on deck.

It was reported by Fanning, a midshipman on the *Richard*, that after surrender Captain Pearson asked Jones what nationality his crew chiefly consisted of. Jones, thinking of strength and reliability rather than numbers, replied "American." "Very well," said Pearson, with the fine sportsmanship characteristic of the English; "it has been diamond cut diamond."

Meanwhile Cottineau in the *Pallas* had engaged the *Countess of Scarborough* and, after a spirited resistance lasting an hour, had captured her. He was planning to turn his prize over to Landais and to sail to the support of Jones, when Landais sailed away, supposedly to help the *Richard*.

The next day Jones transferred his men and prisoners to the *Serapis*; for, as the wind freshened, the poor old battered *Richard*, in spite of every effort to keep her afloat, was slowly settling. The day following it became necessary to abandon her, but Jones stood by till the last. "I saw with inexpressible grief," he wrote, "the last glimpse of the *Bonhomme Richard*."

The much-chagrined British Admiralty now bent its energies to capture Jones and sent out several squadrons to scour the sea; but under cover of fog he slipped past and took his force into the Texel, Holland.

The effect of this brilliant victory was not without important international significance. It elated the enthusiastic French people as much as it disturbed the English, and aroused them to render greater assistance to America. Holland, which had heretofore been neutral, was so influenced by it, as well as by Jones's bearing during the twelve weeks he remained at the Texel,—while the British ambassador vainly blustered,—that she weakened in her neutrality and joined the coalition. England had now against her the three most formidable sea powers of the Continent, and not a single friend. This was soon to prove a telling argument for admitting that the war in the colonies was a failure and granting them independence.

After the American Revolution Jones made a further important contribution to the American Navy in his sound ideas of preparedness by education. We have already quoted his scheme for the establishment of academies affording officers the opportunity for general studies at the dockyards. Later he went much further, and his recommendations were based on his own experience. Though he had known the sea since infancy and had a mind that worked with lightning rapidity in a

crisis, he depended as little on chance for his victories as did Nelson. We have mentioned his declining the command of the *Providence* when he thought he might learn more as first lieutenant on Hopkins's flagship. When he went to France he quickly formed strong friendships with the leading French naval officers, who had no equal in the theory of warfare. In the periods of idleness so often forced upon him Jones made a close study of their strategy and tactics. He carefully observed also their organization of personnel, the structural features of their ships, the equipment of their yards, and the like. Of this self-education he wrote to Robert Morris in 1783:

> If midnight study and the instructions of the greatest and most learned sea officers can have given me advantages, I am not without them. I confess, however, I have yet to learn.... While I was at Brest, as well as while I was inspecting the building of the *America*, as I had furnished myself with good authors, I applied much of my leisure time to the study of naval architecture and other matters that related to the establishment and police of dockyards etc.

Further, in this same communication he makes observations and lays down principles that are so sound and modern that they might have been uttered almost yesterday:

> It is the work of many years' study and experience to acquire the high degree of science necessary for a great sea officer.... A captain of the line at this day must be a tactician. A captain of a cruising frigate may make shift without ever having heard of naval tactics. Until I arrived in France, and became acquainted with that great tactician, Count D'Orvilliers, and his judicious assistant, the Chevalier du Pavilliou, who, each of them honoured me with instructions respecting the science of governing the operations, etc.

of a fleet, I confess I was not sensible how ignorant I had been before that time, of naval tactics. . . . My plan for forming a proper corps of sea officers is, by teaching them the naval tactics in a fleet of evolution. . . . We cannot, like the ancients, build a fleet in a month, and we ought to take example from what has lately befallen Holland. In time of peace it is necessary to prepare, and be always prepared, for war at sea.[1]

Jones here expressed the underlying idea of the War College, to be established a century later at Newport. When Rear Admiral Luce and Captain Mahan, against constant opposition, had to battle for the War College on its establishment and almost up to the Spanish-American War, it is no wonder that Jones, in the earlier age, should find reason to lament to a friend, "My voice has been like a cry in the Desert; I know no remedy but patience."

In conclusion is it not indeed remarkable that Jones, born and reared in Scotland, who had so few years of real residence in America, should have been, nevertheless, so essentially American? He was strongly stamped by two qualities which are peculiarly characteristic of our country—open-mindedness and idealism. Since he began going to sea when he reached the age of twelve, the schools of Scotland could have done little for him. Instead, it was the rough life of the sea and the stimu-

[1] This quotation is from the original draft of the letter, indorsed in Jones's own handwriting with the address of the Honorable Robert Morris. In an early biography, however, it is an abridged form of this letter that appears, with no reference to the fleet of evolution etc.; but there is added this sentence: "I have many things to offer respecting the formation of our navy, but shall reserve my observations on that head until you have leisure to attend them and require them of me." The presumption is that although Jones had carefully formulated these ideas and discussed them with fellow officers, he felt that it would be unwise to send them in a general communication to the Agent of Marine, especially as at this time virtually nothing remained of the Continental navy.

lating friends he made in America that early molded him. His powers of rapid assimilation were unusual. This was shown during the period of his longest stay in America, from his twenty-fifth to his twenty-eighth year. It began with a peculiar crisis in his life, when he was in need of almost everything—sympathy more than all else. In answer to this need he made some real friends, including certain of the best people of North Carolina and Virginia. And it is amazing how quickly he absorbed their speech, manners, and ideas. The two or three years in North Carolina and Virginia gave him characteristics which he never lost. It was then that he became surcharged with idealism, fired with ideas of liberty and the rights of man, as well as with ambition for personal achievement and fame. He was, like many eager idealists, often so impatient and hot-tempered that he risked the loss of all he strove for. Yet strong and sympathetic friends, like Hewes and Morris of the Marine Committee or the peerless Franklin, could ever calm him and make him as docile as a child. His relentless ambition was responsible for a strain of tragedy that pervaded his life, and few were the years that can be described as contented or happy. During the period of action he was absolutely unsparing of self and would sacrifice comfort, rest, and money for success; then, when praise and ample recognition were slow in rewarding what he in strict candor knew was no ordinary service, he became morbidly sensitive and brooded over the injustice.

As he threw himself heart and soul into the American cause at the beginning of the Revolution, he had visions of returning with fame and fortune to seek the hand of a brilliant young woman whom he had met in 1775 while visiting his friend Dr. Read of Goochland County,

Virginia, south of Fredericksburg. Here he had made the acquaintance of Jefferson and Patrick Henry also, for Dr. Read counted among his friends the best of Virginia. It was the spring of the year, and for Jones the spring of life too, as for the first time he met women of high culture and charming manners. The beautiful Dorothea Spotswood Dandridge, nineteen years old, granddaughter of Governor Spotswood and cousin of Martha Washington, completely fascinated him, and his ardent admiration seems to have been returned. What followed is not altogether clear. The aristocratic Dandridges may not have looked with full approval upon the stranger of uncertain origin. And it was quite characteristic of this young naval Hotspur that when he went to war he should have become wholly engrossed in military affairs. During the next three years he did not visit her and, so far as is known, did not write; yet that he continued to cherish her image in his heart is evidenced by his assuring his confidant, Dr. Read, of his "expectation of purchasing a Virginia estate," which, as the kindly doctor knew, was inseparably linked with another expectation. But the latter was not to be realized. As Jones learned in a communication from Dr. Read written sometime during 1778, Miss Dorothea had wedded the celebrated Patrick Henry, a widower, father of six children, and twice her age.

Thus faded away the bright vision of an estate and a happy home in Virginia; Jones had lost his best anchor to windward.

In spite of our just pride in the remarkable service of the leaders in the American Revolution, the total performance of the navy was disappointing, largely because of the lack of organization, discipline, morale,

and tradition. And it was a blot upon our government that Jones, who had rendered such distinguished service and who continued a loyal American citizen to the end, should have been granted no national honors on his death in 1792. He died in Paris; and but for the generous respect of a French official who contributed 392 francs out of his own funds for an indestructible lead casket and a proper burial, he would have been consigned to a pauper's grave. Nor was this neglect because of his obscurity, for the American minister, Gouverneur Morris, saw him on the day of his death and subsequently attended to his affairs. Thus Jones perished; and in like manner the navy, which he had zealously striven to establish on a broad and lasting foundation, came to naught. At the close of the Revolution the few ships remaining were promptly sold. History, however, often reverses its judgments. The country discovered, even before the few years remaining in the eighteenth century were completed, that a navy is not an idle ornament or a menace. When it was reorganized, Jones's ideas more and more were adopted, and now, within our time, the highest place has been awarded him. This was given visible evidence one hundred and thirteen years after his death when the American ambassador at Paris, General Horace Porter, after careful search found and positively identified his remains. France and America then vied in the honors paid him; and a strong American squadron, such as was denied him in life, was his at the end as he returned to the land of his adoption. Further, that his memory might prove a lasting inspiration to the navy his final resting-place was fixed at the great institution of which he had caught the first vision, the United States Naval Academy.

We cannot close the discussion of the Revolution without noting that in spite of all its shortcomings the infant navy left an influence of some power. On the sea as well as on the land, men from a widely scattered area had toiled and bled for a common end. The exploits of greater and lesser heroes were related and awakened growing enthusiasm. For the first time leaders of the thirteen colonies had acted together, and the limited support granted them had, at critical moments, grown to proportions of real strength. The first steps toward national unity had been taken.

CHAPTER III

STEPHEN DECATUR (1779–1820)

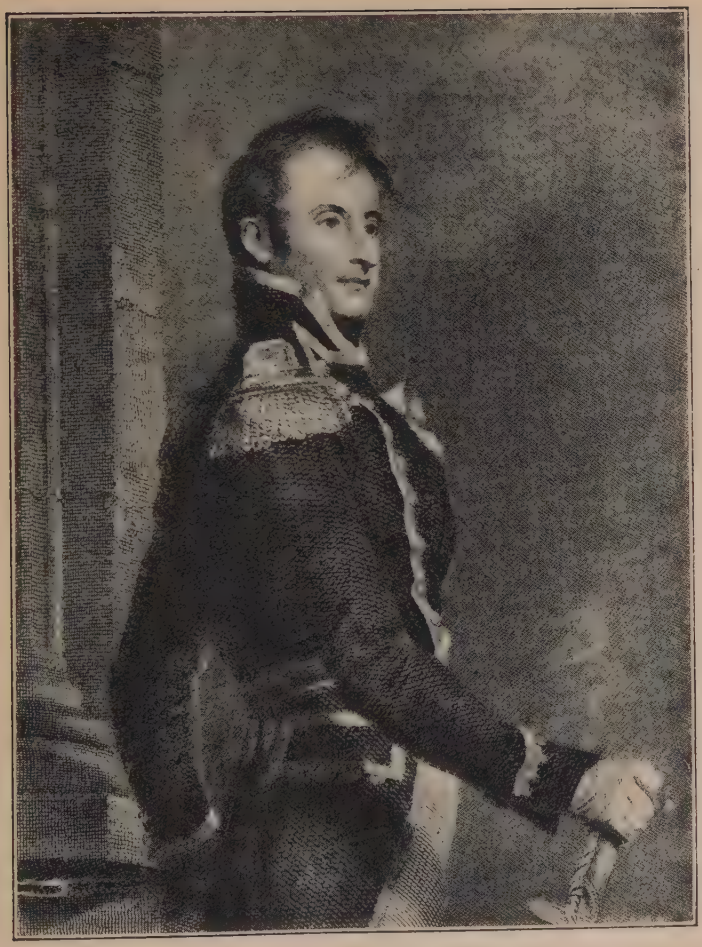
AS THE United States was completing its ninth year under the Constitution, the President and Congress awakened to the need of a navy. Our shipping, which no longer enjoyed the protection afforded to colonial merchantmen by the mother country, had been preyed upon since the acknowledgment of our independence, first by piratical states and later by revolutionary France. The trouble with the Mediterranean pirates was temporarily settled, according to the custom of the time, by treaties purchased with a large sum of money—and that when we had six frigates contracted for and at various stages of completion. The irregularities of the French, however, led to an exchange of blows. In 1798 there was established the Navy Department, for which no provision had been made when the State, Treasury, War, and Post Office departments had been created; and simultaneously the United States abrogated all treaties with France and ordered American ships of war and privateers to make prizes of all French warships, privateers, and merchantmen found on this side of the Atlantic.

Among the youth of Philadelphia who were fired by the call of the country was Stephen Decatur, Jr. His grandfather, who had been a lieutenant in the French Navy, married in Newport, Rhode Island. His father commanded a privateer in the Revolutionary War,

and in the so-called war with France, commanding the twenty-gun sloop of war *Delaware*, took the first prize to our credit, *Le Croyable*. Before this the boy, after one year at the University of Pennsylvania, had discovered that books did not interest him as much as the sea, and urged that he might sail with his father, then commanding a merchant ship. His parents, however, strongly opposed his plan. As a compromise he entered the countinghouse of his father's agents, who were also the agents of the navy in Philadelphia. His heart was at sea; and his pastime was the construction, sparring, and rigging of miniature ships, as well as the study of mathematics and drawing. He was assigned one duty that gave him a thrill of ecstasy: the firm sent him to New Jersey to superintend getting out the keel pieces of the forty-four-gun frigate *United States*. This same frigate was later to win for him his greatest victory.

Commodore John Barry, senior officer of the navy in the French War and commander of the *United States*, was strongly impressed by young Decatur and also understood the prejudices of the family. Without consulting any of them he obtained for the eager lad, then nineteen years old, a midshipman's warrant; and when Decatur, armed with this, again announced his desire, even his determined mother withdrew her opposition.

Decatur found on the *United States* several old schoolfellows from Philadelphia. Charles Stewart was her fourth lieutenant, and Richard Somers was a midshipman; later Jacob Jones joined their number; all of them were destined to win distinction. While the ship was being fitted out, duty was not onerous for the new midshipman, and he employed his leisure hours in studying navigation under a former officer of the Royal



STEPHEN DECATUR
From the painting by Sully

Navy. This was his self-imposed Naval Academy training, and the earnestness of his study and attention to duty, both at this time and when he went to sea, were shown by the fact that in one year he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant.

Captain Thomas Truxtun, commanding the *Constellation*, won lasting honors in the French War by defeating the *Insurgente* and the *Vengeance*; but the frigate *United States*, though she cruised widely, never chanced to meet any of the enemy other than privateers. Decatur, looking for bigger game, was much disappointed.

Two incidents that occurred during this period are of interest as showing the character of the man. In the West Indies, while the officers were enjoying an hour of relaxation on the quarter-deck, the cry arose, "Man overboard!" At once the second and third cutters were called away. The crews responded with alacrity, but they would have been too late if at the first alarm Decatur had not jumped from the mizzen chains and, swimming to the drowning man, held him up till a boat came.

The other incident grew out of insulting remarks uttered by the mate of an Indiaman. Decatur had been sent to enlist a crew; certain men who had signed up were found to be shipping on the Indiaman. Of course Decatur immediately repaired to the merchant ship to secure his sailors. The mate not only attempted to thwart him in his purpose, but in his language abused both the officer and the Service. Decatur, however, calmly held to his point and departed with the men. When he related the occurrence to his father the latter expressed the opinion, in accordance with the military code of the time, that to pass the incident over

and not demand satisfaction would show a lack of spirit. Thereupon Decatur sent his friend Somers to require an apology; and as this was refused, a duel followed. Decatur had told Somers, his second, that he was going to wound his opponent slightly but not take his life; and he did so. He himself was not hit. This, of course, was all that was necessary to settle the affair. Nevertheless, from this same advice we may trace fatal consequences twenty-one years later.

In the French War the United States won most of the engagements and secured advantageous terms of peace early in 1801. At once Congress ordered the navy to be reduced to a skeleton organization. Only thirty-six lieutenants out of one hundred and ten were to be retained. Fortunately Decatur was one of the thirty-six. Hardly had officers been mustered out and most of the ships sold or dismantled when trouble with Tripoli became most threatening. The pasha of that state, believing that he had not extorted all that was possible from the United States, increased his demands; and when our representative did not accede, in May, 1801, he cut down the American flagstaff and declared war. The same month, some weeks previous to the reception of the news in Washington, the government decided to send over a squadron of "observation" under Commodore Richard Dale. One of the ships in the squadron was the *Essex*, Captain William Bainbridge, who chose Decatur as his first lieutenant. He was given this important billet when he had been but three years in the Service.

Commodore Dale, on reaching the Mediterranean, was confronted by an anomalous situation in that Tripoli was at war against the United States but the United States was not at war with Tripoli. He was

ordered to protect American rights but to commit no act of hostility. In consequence he did next to nothing, and the fleet that sailed the following year under Commodore Rodgers accomplished little more.

Among Decatur's personal adventures was a duel, in which he was second, fought by Midshipman Joseph Bainbridge with a young British officer of important family connections, secretary to the governor of Malta. The Englishman, though he had some reputation as a duelist, was killed. When the British requested that Bainbridge and Decatur be surrendered to the civil authorities of the island for trial, the American commodore dispatched them on a ship sailing for the United States. An incident of similar character had occurred a year before. Decatur, having publicly been treated with incivility by a Spanish commanding officer, sought him out on his ship and ashore, a duel being prevented only by the don's temporary disappearance. Such was life on a foreign station.

Four months after his hasty return to the United States Decatur sailed again for the Mediterranean, this time in his own ship. First he had the *Argus*; but on his arrival he was transferred to the *Enterprise*, a schooner carrying twelve guns. Commodore Preble was now in command of American forces in the Mediterranean, and it was with that stern but just disciplinarian, distinguished by his resourcefulness and energy, that the glory of America's conduct of the war began.

Almost the first news that Decatur heard on his return to the Mediterranean was that of the very serious reverse suffered in the loss of the frigate *Philadelphia*, Captain William Bainbridge. While chasing an enemy ketch which was attempting to make Tripoli, Bainbridge had run upon an uncharted reef; he had

used every device to free his vessel, but, being without support of other ships, he had been obliged to surrender to the overpowering force of gunboats that soon swarmed out. The Tripolitans, taking advantage of a high tide two days later, floated the *Philadelphia*, recovered the guns that had been thrown overboard, and brought her into the harbor, making the floating fortress of thirty-six guns an important addition to their defenses. Almost immediately on hearing this, Decatur volunteered to go in and destroy the *Philadelphia* at her moorings. Lieutenant Stewart made a similar offer to Commodore Preble, and the same idea was almost simultaneously suggested in a letter that Captain Bainbridge, in captivity in the pasha's castle, succeeded in sending to Preble through the kindly offices of the Danish minister at Tripoli. The important part of his letter was written in lemon juice, invisible until subjected to heat. Meanwhile Decatur in the *Enterprise* captured the Tripolitan ketch *Mastico*. In the latter Preble at once recognized a means of entering the harbor without causing alarm, and he intrusted the dangerous mission to the officers who had made the capture, the project to be kept secret until the day before they were to set out.

Assembling the complement of the *Enterprise*, Decatur briefly explained the nature of the expedition and called for volunteers. It is proof of his strong leadership as well as the fine morale of his command that every officer, man, and boy at once responded. Being limited to a force of seventy-five, five of whom Preble had said in his orders he would send from the midshipmen on the *Constitution*, Decatur had to make a selection. Among those who sailed in the expedition were three who later attained renown: Lieutenant James

Lawrence, Midshipman Thomas Macdonough, and Midshipman Charles Morris (sent from the *Constitution*). Another important member of the party was a Sicilian pilot, Salvatore Catalano.

The *Mastico* (renamed the *Intrepid* on being taken into the American Navy) sailed from Syracuse that very evening in company with the *Siren*, Lieutenant Charles Stewart, which was to stand by and cover the retreat. All went well until they sighted Tripoli, when a winter gale set in, and they had to make every effort to get offshore in order to save the ketch. For six days they tossed about, most of their provisions wet and spoiled, and the dirty, overcrowded little ketch uncomfortable to the last degree. Nothing daunted, Decatur again made for Tripoli when the weather moderated; and as darkness hid them on the night of 16 February, 1804, he boldly sailed into the harbor.

Following Preble's instructions, Decatur had carefully arranged everything, assigning to certain groups their stations on the different decks after they had boarded and taken the frigate. These were to receive combustibles passed to them and to ignite them. Lieutenant Lawrence, with Midshipmen Macdonough and Laws and ten men, was to fire the berth deck and forward storeroom; Lieutenant Bainbridge's squad of about the same size was to fire the wardroom and steerage; Midshipman Morris's was to fire the cockpit and after storeroom; Lieutenant Thorn's was to guard the ketch; and Midshipman Anderson's was to secure all boats alongside the frigate and to cut off those of her crew who might attempt to swim to shore.

The northwest wind shifted to northeast; and as the expeditionary force neared the vast hulk, made dimly visible by the crescent moon, the breeze almost died

out, so that, drifting under her lee, they lay becalmed, her broadside guns trained directly on them, two hundred yards distant. Here they were hailed by a lookout on the frigate and ordered to keep their distance. But Catalano, who had Decatur standing beside him, responded in such a way as to calm suspicion: alleging that they had lost their anchors in the storm he requested permission to moor alongside the frigate. A boat from the *Intrepid* attached a line to the *Philadelphia's* fore chains and received an after fast from one of the frigate's boats. On these lines the American sailors, still lying concealed on the deck of the ketch, began to haul. It was awkward work; and before they had come alongside, the ten or twelve Tripolitans, curiously looking on from the deck of the *Philadelphia*, detected the fraud and raised the cry "Americanos."

Further concealment was useless. A sharp pull brought the ketch up, and Decatur, preceded by Morris, sprang to the main chains and climbed up over the rail of the *Philadelphia*. Others followed in a mass. Gaining the quarter-deck, Decatur waited till his force was complete and then, sword in hand, led them forward in line abreast, up the deck to the forecastle, sweeping all before them. That they might not give the alarm on shore, they fired not a shot, but cut down their foe or drove them into the sea.

Within five minutes they had complete possession of the ship. Then, passing up and distributing combustibles, according to the plan, they continued their work. When they withdrew, twenty minutes later, the ship was burning fiercely. So quickly was it all done that Midshipman Morris's squad in the cockpit, being the last to receive the materials for firing, had scarcely time to effect their escape.

Vigorous pulling on the sweeps carried the *Intrepid* away from the burning ship, which was now a mass of flames. One can imagine the regret of Decatur that this noble frigate, built by popular subscription in his home city and first commanded by his own father, should not have been taken out and restored to the American flag. But with bowsprit and foremast gone, the frigate, which was lying dismantled under the guns of the pasha's castle and other heavy batteries and was threatened by the many cruisers, galleys, and gunboats close by, could never have been saved. Surprise and destruction were the only course possible. Before the expeditionary force had gone far from the burning ship, her big guns, as the fire reached them, gave a parting salute, one broadside shooting toward the harbor entrance and the other bombarding the castle. Several of the shore batteries now opened on the little *Intrepid*, made visible by the brilliant conflagration. Her crew realized the danger and also the possibility of attack by the cruisers and gunboats. A shot passed through the sail of the ketch; but her gallant men, instead of being alarmed, rested on their oars after they had pulled a short distance toward the harbor entrance, to enjoy the spectacle. Castle, mosques, and minarets stood forth like a glorious pageant. Finally, breaking out in three hearty cheers, the men gave way to rejoin their friends on the *Siren*, who had been anxiously waiting outside.

Commodore Preble was extremely pleased by the exploit and promptly recommended in his official report that Decatur be promoted to the rank of captain. Nelson, who was at this time blockading Toulon, is said to have characterized this feat as "the most bold and daring act of the age."

This occurred in February, 1804. A strict blockade was maintained during the summer, and in August and September of the same year Preble further disturbed the pasha by several bombardments of the town and shipping and by sending in a fire ship. In the first bombardment the pirates attempted to match their gunboats with the six in the American fleet borrowed from the king of Naples, and the encounter that followed had some thrilling moments.

In this engagement Decatur, who commanded a division of gunboats, boarded one of the Tripolitan craft and captured it after a sharp hand-to-hand encounter. Putting a lieutenant and the larger part of his crew in charge of the prize, he was towing it out of the harbor when he learned that the commander of the gunboat his brother James Decatur had been engaging had surrendered, but that when James Decatur stepped on board the man had treacherously shot him dead and slipped away.

At once Decatur cast loose from his prize and, without considering how small his crew was, followed hard after the offender, even to the enemy lines. Catching up with the gunboat, he dashed on board followed by Macdonough and the remnant of his crew. It was eleven men to three or four times their number, in the kind of conflict for which the pirates were famous. For twenty minutes the fight was undecided. Finally Decatur engaged the Tripolitan leader, larger and fiercer than the rest, in a hand-to-hand combat. As the Tripolitan struck savagely at him with his huge iron pike, Decatur received the blow on his cutlass, which snapped at the hilt. Though slightly wounded in the arm and breast by the next blow, Decatur rushed forward and grappled with his foe. They fell to the

deck, Decatur on top. Three of the American seamen had been so wounded as to be unable to give further support; but when a Tripolitan officer raised his sword to give Decatur the finishing stroke, a seaman named Frazier, though unable to use either arm, rushed forward and received the blow on his head. Being near to the Tripolitan he saved his captain and escaped without serious injury to himself.

At this moment the Tripolitan captain, turning Decatur, pinned him down with his left hand while with his right he drew from his sash a short dagger. But Decatur, freeing his left, caught the hand that held the dagger, and with his right reached a pistol in his pocket. He could not draw it, but cocked and fired it. The hold of his enemy relaxed, and Decatur sprang to his feet as the pirate expired. With the Tripolitan commander killed, the rest of the pirates lost heart and quickly gave way.

The next ship from America brought Decatur his commission as captain, the promotion dated back to correspond with the burning of the *Philadelphia*. Decatur was now twenty-five years old. Returning to Malta, he was entertained by Sir Alexander Ball, the same governor who two years before had demanded his surrender for trial. The new secretary occupying the position of the officer slain in the duel was the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The latter evidently was impressed by Decatur, for thirty years later he quoted a remark made by the American officer at dinner.

An honorable peace was concluded with Tripoli in 1805, and the American force returned to home waters. As the frigate *Congress*, of which Decatur was captain, lay at anchor in Hampton Roads, a sailing yacht visited her, the party including the mayor of Norfolk, a wealthy

merchant, and his beautiful daughter, Miss Susan Wheeler. Decatur happened not to be on board at the time; but it is related that nothing interested Miss Wheeler so much as his miniature, by an Italian artist, that was hanging in the cabin. On the following day, when Decatur called on the mayor and was entertained at dinner and a ball, she thought the officer not less attractive than the miniature. The next year Miss Susan became Mrs. Decatur, and discovered in the uninterrupted happiness of married life that her hero was as loyal and devoted to his home as he was to the Service.

Only seven years after the conflict with the Barbary states came the War of 1812. For some time both France and England had been causes for irritation, yet even those statesmen who saw what was on the horizon obtained no military or naval preparation. They anticipated that the struggle would be a brief affair on land in which militia from a few states would march into Canada and, having received the surrender of important posts, would secure the annexation of that great province. The navy had been greatly reduced in size; but, as Woodrow Wilson remarked of the two branches of the Service at this time, "Her seamen were professionals, not amateurs like her soldiers." A great stimulus had been given to the merchant marine, for American ships, because of the Napoleonic wars, had taken over practically all the neutral carrying trade. This had developed hardy seamen and fast, efficient ships, constituting an unorganized but important naval reserve.

When hostilities began, most men in the government believed it absurd to think of matching England on her own element when, if only totals are considered, she

had twenty warships to the Republic's one; their plan was to save the American Navy by locking the ships deep in the protected harbors. Fearing that orders might be issued in accordance with such an inactive policy, all skippers whose ships were ready put to sea.

Captain Isaac Hull, commanding the *Constitution*, gained first honors. In attempting to make New York to join Rodgers's squadron, he ran into the midst of Broke's English squadron of five ships, off New Jersey. In the face of such odds escape seemed hopeless. Several times Hull was opened on by his enemies within long range; and every time he attempted to tow or kedge—for during most of the sixty-six hours of the chase he lay nearly or quite becalmed—he found that the enemy could bring more boats to their leading ship. Yet by his perseverance and good seamanship he eluded them all and sailed safely into Boston. Waiting only long enough to learn that there were no orders, he again put to sea, and two and a half weeks later engaged the frigate *Guerrière*. The British fought with great gallantry, but neither their crew nor ship proved a match for the Americans. Within thirty minutes after coming to close quarters the *Guerrière* was reduced to a wreck, her masts carried away, and the hull shot so thoroughly to pieces that the following day she had to be blown up by her captor.

Boston and most of New England, with their Federalist party leanings and their extensive commercial interests, were opposed to the war. The victory of the *Constitution*, a Boston-built ship commanded by a New England skipper, which had sailed from their city to return in triumph, changed their feelings perceptibly. A similar result in Boston and elsewhere followed the next victory, in which Decatur was the central figure.

His frigate, the *United States*, cruising independently off the Canary Isles on the 25th of October, 1812, sighted the British frigate *Macedonian*, twelve miles distant, which at once showed a desire to engage. The captain of the *Macedonian*, John Surman Carden, thought he was meeting the American frigate *Essex*, reported to have sailed for these waters. In the *Essex* he would have engaged a ship smaller than his own; yet since the *Macedonian* was one of the crack frigates of the British Navy, her crew carefully chosen and constantly practiced in seamanship and gunnery, it is doubtful if Carden would have shown less eagerness for an engagement had he known from the first the identity of his antagonist. Before the war Decatur and Carden, commanding the same ships, had entertained each other in American waters and had discussed the relative merit of their ships. The *United States* was not only larger and heavier than the *Macedonian* but carried more guns. Nevertheless Carden laid stress on the fact that the *Macedonian* had a main battery of 18-pounders, whereas the *United States* had 24-pounders, which, he argued, could not be handled so rapidly or effectively on a frigate. Carden was a good fellow; but the conclusion of his argument showed that he had certain limitations: "Besides, Decatur, though your ships may be good enough, and you are a clever set of fellows, what practice have you had in war? There is the rub."

Since then the *Macedonian* had been to England; and fresh from drydock at Portsmouth, with a veteran crew, she was supposed to be the match of any frigate afloat, large or small. Naturally all was confidence on the *Macedonian*. Those on board had not heard of the fate of the *Guerrière*.

In entering the engagement Carden possessed two advantages: the weather gauge and superior speed. The first should have enabled him to come to close quarters at once; but, still under the delusion that he was opposed to the *Essex*, which was much weaker in long guns than in carronades, Carden hauled close to the wind and kept his distance. This gave the *United States*, with her greater number of long guns of heavy weight, a marked advantage. After the ships had passed on opposite tacks, Carden wore in pursuit and, catching up with his antagonist, reached a position at long range off her port quarter. An exchange of broadsides now cost the *United States* her mizzen topgallant mast, and the *Macedonian* her gaff-halyards and mizzen topmast, the latter falling into her main top. This injury to the *Macedonian* was serious, for it deprived her of her superiority in sailing. As the two ships now sailed along on parallel courses, the *United States* in advance, the advantage lay with the ship that had more long guns. To offset this and to bring his ship near enough to use her carronades, Carden changed from a parallel to a converging course. Decatur's response was to yaw and fire a broadside; then, running ahead, he repeated the maneuver. On came the doomed *Macedonian*, exposing her starboard bow to a severe diagonal fire that dismounted most of her carronades and at the same time damaged her hull and disabled many of the crew. There was only one slight chance left for Carden, and that was to close and board. He attempted to do so, but was thwarted by Decatur; for the *United States*, as Carden wrote in his report, being "comparatively in good order," had now shot ahead to secure a raking position, whereupon, since the *Macedonian* was "a perfect wreck and un-

manageable log, I deemed it prudent, though a painful extremity, to surrender His Majesty's ship."

In the conclusion of his report Carden observed, "On being taken aboard the enemy's ship I ceased to wonder at the result of the battle." He then proceeded to explain the cause of his defeat, mentioning the heavy scantling of the *United States* (which, he said, was equal to that of "a seventy-four-gun ship"), her cannon of unusual size and number for a frigate, and her complement "of four hundred and seventy-eight picked men." All this was true; indeed the *United States* was superior to her foe, easily by a ratio of three to two. This was vastly to the credit of the young navy, for it proved how well they had built the few frigates authorized. To have been complete in his explanation Carden should also have mentioned the leader of the four hundred and seventy-eight men, who had developed in them such a telling organization. Decatur himself reported of his command: "The enthusiasm of every officer, seaman, and marine, on board this ship, on discovering the enemy, their steady conduct in battle, and precision of their fire, could not be surpassed." An American editor writing at the beginning of the war commented that just as France was supposed to have enlarged her power on land all through Europe, so England had on the sea all over the world; and it was no empty boast "that the ocean was her domain and that not a sail but by permission spread." The victories of Hull and Decatur as well as those of Jacob Jones, who with the sloop *Wasp* took the *Frolic*, and of William Bainbridge, who with the *Constitution* took the *Java*,—all occurring in 1812 in the first six months of the war,—were a rude challenge to the supremacy of the British Navy.

It was to one of his lieutenants, Hamilton, son of the Secretary of the Navy, that Decatur intrusted his dispatches to Washington with the captured colors. The lieutenant, learning on his arrival that his father, mother, and sisters were at a ball being given to the officers of the navy, immediately sought them there. It was a thrilling moment when he appeared, and another when the colors of the *Macedonian* were borne in by the ranking officers present, Captains Hull and Stewart, and "presented to Mrs. Madison, the lady of the President, amidst the inspiring strains of music."

When the *United States* and the *Macedonian* arrived in New York, Decatur received the freedom of the city, and a sumptuous banquet was given to him and his fellow officers. Among the toasts proposed was "Our Navy! With such an auspicious dawn, what may we not hope will be its meridian splendor!" A few days later the crew of the *United States* were given a similar ovation. Preceded by the captured band of the *Macedonian*, the seamen marched through the principal streets to the City Hotel, "dressed in blue jackets and trousers, red waistcoats, and glazed hats decked with pendant streamers of ribbon." They were greeted everywhere by enthusiastic crowds, and in the evening they found reserved for them the entire pit of one of the theaters. All this had a very real value in 1812–1813, when it was difficult for the government to command whole-hearted support. So although from a military point of view England would not have been crippled had she lost several times as many frigates, to the American republic the slight advantage was of great moment. Anything that aroused enthusiasm tended toward insuring united support. The country in its brief history had gained its independence, it had

evolved a remarkable constitution, and it had produced some exceptional men, but it had not yet brought its highly individualistic elements together into one nation.

The acts passed by Congress in 1813 were the plainest possible evidence of the effect produced by these naval successes. In January Congress provided for the construction of four ships of the line and six frigates like the *Constitution* and the *United States*, and two months later authorized six more vessels and gave the President power at his discretion to add ships of war on the Lakes.

New York was too closely blockaded by sea to encourage attempts to escape by sailing past Sandy Hook. Instead Decatur laboriously worked back through Hell Gate into Long Island Sound and thought he might get to sea by rounding Montauk Point. But he was thwarted by vigilant foes. Chased into New London and up the Thames, for many months he was closely blockaded there by Sir Thomas Hardy, Nelson's favorite captain and the one who caught him as he fell at Trafalgar. When escape seemed impossible, Decatur gladly welcomed a transfer to the command of the *President*, of the same size as the *United States*, but of greater speed. She was lying in New York, and because of her speed Decatur had bright hopes of eluding the blockade and again carrying on active warfare. For some time he was held in the harbor to meet an expected attack of the British which failed to materialize. On the evening of the 14th of January, 1815, thinking that a heavy wind blowing offshore must have driven the blockaders from their stations, he sailed past Sandy Hook, approaching the bar at eight o'clock. But the pilots had mistaken the channel, and the heavily laden frigate grounded. For two hours she thumped violently; and before she could be got off she was much strained,

breaking several of her rudder braces and displacing a part of her false keel. She had lost her speed, and the wind made it impossible to return for repairs; her only chance lay in eluding the British squadron. Hoping to pass inside of the blockaders Decatur sailed fifty miles east close to the Long Island shore and then changed his course to southeast by east, heading for the open sea. But at five o'clock next morning, as the sky lightened a little, he found that he had sailed into the very midst of his enemies. By the dim light he discovered three ships right ahead of him and not more than two miles distant. From this time until half-past eleven that night the *President* was struggling against her enemies. From three o'clock in the afternoon until half-past eight the conflict lay between the American ship and the *Endymion*, one of the strongest and heaviest of the British frigates and supposedly a match single-handed for the *President*. In this the *Endymion* had the advantage of speed and often of position. Seeing that the advantage lay with the enemy, Decatur conceived the idea of laying aboard the *Endymion* when she should close on his starboard beam and, seizing the better sailing ship, make good his escape; but the cheers of his crew may have revealed the plan to the enemy, for the *Endymion* yawed and denied him the opportunity. Foiled in this, Decatur changed his course to southward; and when the *Endymion* did the same he was able, by presenting broadside to broadside, to meet her on equal terms. His hope now was to cripple her and as darkness came on to escape the rest of the fleet. After two hours and a half of this style of fighting, the advantage seemed with Decatur; the *Endymion* ceased firing and, with her sails and yards much cut up, dropped out of action. Decatur had been twice

wounded, having been struck in the chest by a splinter and stunned for some moments, and later having his face torn,—again struck by a splinter,—the wound bleeding freely. But he had not left his station; and when at nine o'clock, under the cover of a cloudy night, he again changed his course the chances for the *President* improved. At eleven, however, the clouds blew away and disclosed four of the enemy within easy range surrounding the *President*. Three of the five lieutenants of the *President* had been killed, her total in killed and wounded amounting to eighty-five; further resistance would have meant increased loss of life without any chance of changing the ultimate result. Ordering his crew below to protect them from the fire of the enemy before the latter had discovered his intention, Decatur surrendered the *President*.

The British treated Decatur with the greatest courtesy and arranged for his early parole and return to New London. He arrived on the 22d of February and was greeted by the whole city, who dragged his carriage through the streets "amidst cheers, waving of banners and handkerchiefs, and blessings from the lips of the fair and the venerable." In New York the ship carpenters of the port volunteered sixteen hundred days' work as their contribution toward the construction of a frigate in order that Decatur might have a fitting command. Already, however, the war was ended; for terms of peace which had been signed at Ghent the day before Christmas were ratified by the Senate and the President even as the British frigate was carrying Decatur to New London.

While the United States had been engaged in war with Great Britain, the Barbary states, urged on by the latter country, had disregarded their treaties, and

Algiers had even seized the American brig *Edwin*, holding its crew for ransom. Not two weeks after peace had been concluded with Great Britain, Congress declared war on Algiers. At once it was planned to send the entire naval force of the country to the Mediterranean, William Bainbridge in command. Decatur had returned too recently to have had his court martial, ordered according to custom on the loss of a ship; but the Navy Department showed its confidence by giving him command of one of the two divisions destined for the Mediterranean, with the new frigate *Guerrière* for his flagship.

With characteristic dispatch Decatur sailed at the first possible moment, several weeks before Bainbridge was ready. Learning, as he neared Gibraltar, that the Algerine fleet had been out cruising and had not yet returned to Algiers, he made every effort to come up with it before it should receive the alarm. Accordingly he sailed east. Two days later when he was near Cape Gata, the *Constellation*, by chance in the lead, sighted a large frigate standing to the southeast, which turned out to be not only a part of the Algerine Navy but the flagship *Mashouda*, commanded by the grand admiral Rais Hammida. At once the squadron began to scatter in pursuit, but Decatur signaled the ships back to their regular formation. He hoped, by approaching in a leisurely fashion, to conceal the identity of the American force till at close quarters; and he might have succeeded if the *Constellation*, misunderstanding the game, had not hoisted the national ensign. Decatur immediately attempted to offset this by ordering the British flag flown from all the ships, but the Algerine had taken alarm and quickly spread all sail in flight. There followed an exchange of fire at long range. Then Hammida, despairing of making Algiers, came about

and headed for Cartagena, on the Spanish coast. Decatur, seeing that the *Mashouda* would soon pass under the guns of the *Guerrière*, held his fire, although the musketry from the Algerine was somewhat annoying. As the right moment came, a broadside from the American flagship swept the decks of the *Mashouda*, and another quickly followed. Rais Hammida was killed; and, after a second futile effort to escape, the *Mashouda* surrendered.

Decatur next scoured the sea for other members of the Algerine fleet, taking a brig, the *Esteido*; then he boldly sailed for Algiers. A white flag at the foremast of the *Guerrière* and the Swedish flag at the main brought out the Swedish consul as well as the Algerine captain of the port. The Algerine smiled incredulously as he was informed of the fate of the *Mashouda* and the *Esteido*; but when the wounded lieutenant of the *Mashouda* was brought forward and told his story, he was visibly moved, and his manner changed. He was now solicitous to know on what terms a treaty might be made and urged that a truce be agreed to immediately so as to allow time for its preparation: he had become anxious for the safety of the rest of the Algerine Navy. Decatur would agree to no truce. On the following day the Algerine returned with power to conclude the treaty. Hereafter there was to be no tribute paid; no Americans were to be enslaved, even in event of war; and the Americans who had been taken on the *Edwin* were to be returned promptly with their property. The Dey's commissioner represented the terms as more severe than they had agreed to with any other country, but Decatur would have nothing less. Before leaving to submit the treaty to his master, the commissioner begged that there might be a truce while

the final terms were being adjusted. Again Decatur refused. The commissioner then pleaded for three hours. Decatur replied, "Not a minute; if your squadron appears in sight before the treaty is actually signed by the Dey, and sent off with the American prisoners, ours will capture it."

Shortly after the commissioner had departed, an Algerine ship of war crowded with soldiers was seen standing in toward the city. At once all was excitement in the American force as they prepared to attack it, either afloat or under the guns of the forts, but they were doomed to disappointment. A boat was seen pulling violently from shore and flying a white flag—the signal which had been agreed upon as indicating that the treaty had been signed, the Swedish consul having pledged his word that it should not be abused. Spurred on by the imminent danger, the Algerines had pulled five miles to shore, secured the signature of the treaty, and returned, bringing with them the ten American prisoners that had been held for ransom—all within the space of three hours. It is safe to say that no Barbary state had ever shown equal celerity before in concluding a treaty.

On arriving in the Mediterranean Decatur had chanced to learn that Tunis and Tripoli had not wholly lived up to their treaties. Because of poor communications no information of this had been received at home, and the Navy Department had given Decatur no instructions as to procedure. Decatur promptly decided on what he thought he could do successfully and what he guessed Washington would want him to do. Repairing to Tunis, he informed the Bey through Mr. Noah, the American consul, that an indemnity of $46,000 for the violation of neutrality and treaty rights

must be paid within twelve hours or hostilities would follow without further warning.

"Tell your admiral to come and see me," said the Bey to Mr. Noah.

"He declines coming, Your Highness, until these disputes are settled, which are best done on board ship."

"But this is not treating me with becoming dignity." And then after a pause the Bey exclaimed, "I know this admiral; he is the same one who, in the war with Sidi Yusef of Trablis, burned the frigate."

"The same."

"Hum! why do they send wild young men to treat for peace with old powers?"

The Bey haggled and attempted to postpone the time for payment, but yielded in the end. Decatur in full uniform, attended by all his staff, landed and was received with great distinction.

On obtaining the indemnity he next proceeded to Tripoli, and for a similar offense demanded $30,000. The pasha flatly refused and, assembling all his troops, including twenty thousand Arabs, manned the batteries and threatened immediate war against the United States. If hostilities had followed and the American force had suffered a reverse, Decatur would have been in an embarrassing position; but he understood with whom he was treating. The pasha soon thought better of his threats and sent the governor of Tripoli on board the *Guerrière* to accede to the American demands. Of course the pasha asked that the amount of the indemnity be reduced. Decatur, on learning from the American consul that $25,000 would cover the American losses, granted a reduction to that amount; but he added a proviso that ten Christian slaves of

whom he had heard, two Danish and the rest Sicilian by nationality, should be released. This was agreed to.

The money was paid and the captives were freed. Then a salute of thirty-one guns was fired from the pasha's castle as the American ensign was rehoisted on the consulate, while the band sent from the *Guerrière* played "Hail Columbia." Decatur sought to impress the semicivilized peoples with the dignity of the United States.

This formality took place on 7 August, 1815. Within seventy-one days after sailing from New York, Decatur had brought to terms of his own dictating the three Barbary states that had long caused trouble. Commodore Bainbridge, the commander in chief of the force, did not reach the Mediterranean until the work had been accomplished. Not meeting with Decatur, who was at Messina and later at Naples, he proceeded to Algiers and then to Tripoli and Tunis, only to find American affairs in the best possible condition. When Decatur joined him at Malaga, Bainbridge had a fleet of eighteen ships, which, with a ship of the line for his flagship, was by far the strongest force yet assembled under the American flag. Its formidable appearance had a salutary effect on American interests abroad.

In the further history of Stephen Decatur there remains only the incident of his tragic death. He was a victim of the dueling code at the hands of Commodore James Barron. This narrative has already shown how at the beginning of his career the code was inculcated in him by his father and how he acted as second for Joseph Bainbridge at Malta. Several years later he served as second for Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry and had the satisfaction of bringing the affair to an end without fatality. The last sad affair was of

Commodore Barron's seeking. It happened that Decatur had sat on Barron's court martial in 1807, ordered because of the humiliation done to Barron's ship the *Chesapeake* by the *Leopard*; and as a navy commissioner in 1819 Decatur had opposed giving Barron (who had been absent from the country for some years) one of the best commands afloat—an appointment urged by some of the Virginia delegation, though it meant the passing over of officers distinguished in the War of 1812. In answering a sharp letter from Barron, Decatur begins, "Between you and myself there never has been a personal difference." Undoubtedly the misunderstanding would have cleared had not supposed friends fomented the trouble by carrying back and forth remarks of the principals and distorting the truth.

As, with pistols in their hands on the dueling-ground at Bladensburg, they were given last instructions, Barron observed to Decatur that he hoped on meeting in another world they would be better friends than they had been in this. To which Decatur replied, "I have never been your enemy, sir." But as if led by the Greek idea of inevitable fate, the duel went forward. When Commodore Bainbridge, Decatur's second, reached "two," in the count of "One, two, three," both fired. Decatur fell mortally wounded, and died in the prime of manhood, forty-one years old.

Pro libertate et patria dulce periculum ("Peril is something to be loved in defense of liberty and one's native land") was the motto of the Decatur family, and this supplies remarkably well the keynote to the career that has just been outlined. Decatur never hesitated when there was a great end in view, but he laid his plans so well that his gallantry was free from

recklessness as he dashed forward to success. After his victories he was toasted in all the big cities where he chanced to be, and he was regarded with a still deeper feeling in the Service. When, after the loss of the *President*, he was appointed to command a squadron sent to Algiers, officers and sailors who had served under him came crowding forward to accompany him on the *Guerrière*. It was his intrepidity that attracted them,—men love a leader,—but it was also his kindness and personal consideration that had aroused affection and loyalty. In an age when oaths and flogging were the approved means of enforcing obedience, Decatur won his men by the protection and care he unfailingly gave them. He frequently addressed them, explaining what was proper conduct; they obeyed because he expected them to do right. He was more exacting of his officers than of the seamen, for, as he once remarked, the former had higher aims and more stringent obligations; further they had a future, which it was within their power to make brilliant. One of the few times that he gave way to anger was when an old sailor came to him, his mouth bleeding because an officer standing in the rigging above him had kicked him on account of failure to understand and properly execute orders. Not inappropriately his men compared him to Nelson, and applied to him that splendid characterization of the great leader: "Our Nel is as brave as a lion and as gentle as a lamb."

Perhaps no act in the first half of the nineteenth century fired Americans more than the destruction of the *Philadelphia*. An officer who had served as a youth in Bainbridge's division sent to Algiers recorded even thirty years later his thrill as he caught his first glimpse of Decatur. And he gave it as his opinion, referring es-

pecially to the burning of the *Philadelphia* and the attack on the Tripolitan gunboats, "To the example of personal gallantry thus set by Decatur before Tripoli, and the chivalrous spirit communicated to his companions in arms, we may ascribe in no small degree that heroic tone which has characterized all the after achievements of our navy."

CHAPTER IV

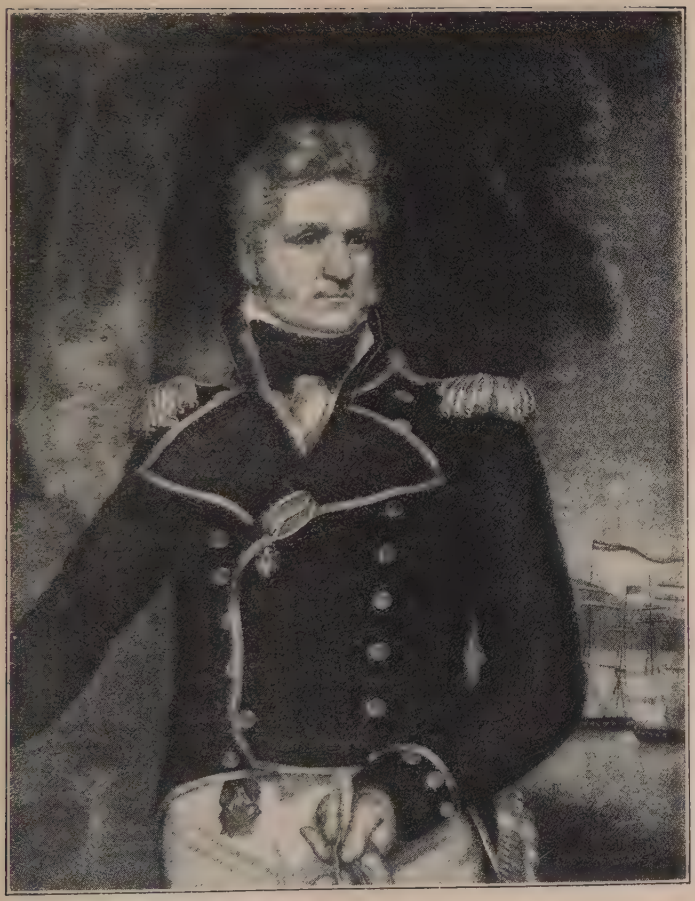
THOMAS MACDONOUGH (1783–1825)

THE NAVAL story of the War of 1812 is only half told when one has finished the exploits of Hull, Decatur, and others on the Atlantic. Indeed, according to the government's original plan for winning the war, operations on the sea were to be merely defensive; those on the northern frontier were to be offensive. When our army had aggressively crossed the border and occupied the strongholds of Canada, as in 1812 it was fully expected to do within a few months, perhaps a few weeks, the United States could treat advantageously with the enemy on peace. In the fighting on the northern frontier, on the Lakes, the navy originally had not been thought of, but it was destined to play an indispensable part.

The War of 1812 was from beginning to end full of surprises to both Americans and British. Account has already been given of the exultation on one side and the amazement and mortification on the other when American frigates and sloops successfully challenged British supremacy on the sea. A corresponding shock of quite opposite character came on the pusillanimous surrender of General William Hull: the force that was to have seized western Canada yielded all of Michigan to the British without even a battle. General Hull was an uncle of Captain Isaac Hull, who commanded the *Constitution*. Not much better followed in the

autumn of the same year, when Van Rensselaer with a superior force was defeated with severe losses at Queenstown; and when Dearborn, who had advanced with a large force from Plattsburg on Montreal, turned back on reaching the border because the militia, raising a point of constitutional law, declined to leave the country; and when, a year later, Wilkinson, proceeding with eight thousand men down the St. Lawrence from Sacketts Harbor toward Montreal, returned to New York and into winter quarters after no other engagement than the disgraceful skirmish at Chrystler's Farm, in which two thousand Americans were defeated by eight hundred Canadians. It is hard to believe that American armies could have met with such reverses, but the explanation is to be found in the utter lack of preparation. This was shown in the miserable roads or none at all along our northern border (resulting in difficulty of communication and lack of supplies), in poor generals (with a few exceptions), and in a foolish reliance on the ill-organized militia called into service for only a few months at most. Many were the difficulties that confronted the hastily extemporized navy on the Lakes also; but in the Service afloat the officers in command were young and, with at least a part of their crews, had been schooled in the Tripolitan War or in the very superior merchant marine of that time.

On Lake Ontario, on Lake Erie, and on Lake Champlain there began a shipbuilding race for the control of the waterway. Lake Ontario, which constituted the center in the long American line of operations, was looked upon as the most important; and Commodore Chauncey, the senior American naval officer on the Lakes, was given command. Opposed to him was Sir James Yeo. Both were cautious; and



THOMAS MACDONOUGH

From the painting by Jarvis

though they gave aid in the military operations of their respective forces, they preferred to fight indecisive minor engagements rather than to risk all in an effort to gain undisputed control.

Lake Erie furnishes a more brilliant chapter. For a year the British had the lead; and when Master Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry, who was sent in March, 1813, to secure control of the lake, took over the work begun by Lieutenant Jesse Elliott, he was blockaded for four months while his ships were under construction. He succeeded eventually not only in saving his ships but in getting a force of nine vessels into the open lake, where he was superior to the enemy. Then the game was reversed, for it was now Perry who was watching his opponent Barclay engaged in completing his last and strongest unit at Malden. On the 10th of September, 1813, Barclay, forced by lack of supplies to come out, found Perry ready for battle off Put-in-Bay. The wind was light, making maneuvering slow and difficult, and there was a misunderstanding of orders in the American force. Consequently for two hours and a half Perry in his flagship the *Lawrence*, supported by only two small schooners, was opposed to the *Detroit*, the *Queen Charlotte*, and the *Hunter*, the three strongest units of the enemy. When the *Lawrence*[1] had been pounded to the point where there was no further fight left in her, with four fifths of her crew killed or wounded, Perry made his famous trip in an open boat to the brig *Niagara*, which was just coming into action.

[1] At the beginning of the engagement Perry hoisted a flag on which were inscribed the last words of Lawrence, "Don't give up the ship." Death had overtaken Lawrence, but it was his unconquerable soul that led Perry through to victory. Perry's flag, the most famous naval flag in the country, is preserved at the United States Naval Academy (see Frontispiece).

With an entirely fresh ship he sailed aggressively through the enemy's line, engaging with his starboard broadside the *Detroit* and the *Queen Charlotte*, which had fouled, and with his port the smaller ships. The *Caledonia* and other vessels of his fleet followed effectively, and within fifteen minutes the battle was won. The total British force, consisting of two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop, was captured. As this brought undisputed control of Lake Erie, General Harrison, after a year of reverses and delay, was now able to cross over into Canada and, pursuing the British and Indians, to win the battle of the Thames.

Until the third year of the war Lake Champlain received much less attention than the other two. Early in the war control of this lake had been deemed important; but it was important only as a road leading to Canada just as in the French and Indian War and in the Revolution. It is safe to say that the full extent of its strategic value was not recognized; otherwise the government, sacrificing operations in Indiana, Michigan, and New York, would have bent every effort to secure this direct waterway to Montreal. Had the American Army succeeded in gaining that stronghold, it would have broken the line of communications between Canada and England, and the British forces in Michigan and western Canada, being cut off from supplies, could not have kept the field.

Early in October, 1812, Lieutenant Thomas Macdonough, having received orders, journeyed from Portland, Maine, to Burlington, Vermont, much of the way on horseback, to command the future American naval force on Lake Champlain. Not the least important subject in his mind as he rode through the Notch in the White Mountains, the woods gorgeous in autumn

colors, was a certain lady of quality living in Middletown, Connecticut, whom he expected soon to marry.

Macdonough was then twenty-nine years old, having been in the Service not quite thirteen years. He had entered at sixteen, appointed a midshipman from Delaware. Like Decatur, he was fired by the idea of fighting the French. The U.S.S. *Ganges*, to which he was detailed, captured two Guineamen and a French privateer; but the young midshipman soon had to meet a much more formidable enemy, as related in his brief "Autobiography":

> About this time the yellow fever made its appearance on board and many of the men and officers fell victims, after a few hours' illness, to its destructive ravages. Several midshipmen and myself, with a number of men, having caught this fever, were sent on shore at Havana and put into a dirty Spanish hospital. Nearly all of the men and officers died and were taken out in carts as so many hogs would have been. A midshipman, a surgeon's mate, and myself, through the blessing of divine Providence, recovered and took passage for the United States, destitute of all the comforts and even conveniences of life.

In the Tripolitan War Macdonough was a midshipman on the *Philadelphia* and escaped confinement at the pasha's castle with other officers of the ill-fated frigate only because a few days before her capture he had been detailed to assist in taking a prize into Gibraltar.

As already related, Macdonough was associated with Decatur, five years his senior, in the most stirring events of the Tripolitan War. In their hazardous service on the ketch *Intrepid* and on the gunboats they saw each other under severest tests, and the warm friendship that began then lasted through life. Macdonough's

own account of these events is marked by two strong characteristics—simplicity and modesty. In his "Autobiography" he relates:

> I then, in the harbor of Syracuse, joined the schooner *Enterprise*, Lieutenant Stephen Decatur, commander. Was with him when the frigate *Philadelphia* was burned in the harbor of Tripoli and when he captured, by boarding, the gunboats in one of the actions with the enemy's vessels and batteries. Here I consider was the school where our navy received its first lessons, and its influence has remained to this day and will continue as long as the navy exists.[1]

One of the most vexatious problems confronting the young Republic in the ensuing years was that which grew out of the British practice of impressing seamen. That Captain Barron should have permitted H.M.S. *Leopard* to take American sailors from the U.S.S. *Chesapeake* aroused great indignation. An incident of opposite character, unknown to fame, shows what the quiet, unassuming Macdonough could do in defense of national honor and seamen's rights. It happened only a year before the *Chesapeake-Leopard* affair and is related in the "Autobiography" as follows:

> When I was first lieutenant of the *Syren* brig an occurrence took place in the harbor of Gibraltar which excited a good deal of feeling both on the side of the English and ourselves. A British man-of-war's boat boarded an American merchantman which lay near the *Syren* and took out, or impressed, one of her men. I went alongside the British boat in one of ours and demanded him, which demand was refused. I then took hold of the man and took him in my boat and brought him on board the *Syren*. He was an American and of course we kept him.

[1] Written in 1822.

The Navy Department made no mistake in ordering such a lieutenant to the command at Lake Champlain. On arrival Macdonough found conditions as unpromising as could be imagined. The force consisted of two tiny gunboats in wretched condition and three sloops which had been purchased from merchants on the lake to be converted into warships. Materials were lacking; and among his difficulties, he wrote, was that "nobody knew anything that was necessary to be done." Local ship carpenters were secured, but such as had any experience in mounting guns and equipping a man of war were not to be found. In the emergency everyone, including a midshipman and even Macdonough himself, went to work. As soon as a vessel was ready she was hurried to Plattsburg, where General Dearborn had assembled a force to invade Canada. On 16 November, 1812, the army, consisting of five thousand regulars and militia, advanced, its right protected by Macdonough's force of two sloops with seven guns each and two gunboats with one gun each. Macdonough maintained control of the lake, but after a sharp skirmish Dearborn fell back four miles across the border.

Early in December the American squadron went into winter quarters south of Burlington, and Macdonough properly prepared for Christmas by going to Connecticut and returning with his bride.

The following year, 1813, was one of varying fortunes for the American cause on Lake Champlain, with affairs at the end precisely in the same relation as at the beginning. Macdonough had used the winter to secure ship carpenters and guns and supplies from New York. Fitting out a third sloop and strengthening all of them, he had a much more respectable force on the lake; but his superiority vanished on the third of June

when the officer next in command, Lieutenant Sidney Smith, taking two gunboats, ventured imprudently down the Richelieu River, misled by his pilots. In the narrow channel, where wind and current were against him, he was attacked by three of the enemy gunboats, supported by land forces, and was obliged to surrender. Thus Macdonough lost nearly two thirds of his force. Soon the British ventured out into the lake and seized whatever lay undefended in their way, afloat or on shore. On news of this reverse the Navy Department promptly ordered Macdonough to take measure for regaining control "with unlimited authority to procure the necessary resources of men, materials, and munitions for that purpose."

Without delay he purchased two sloops and made requisition upon the navy yards at Boston and New York for ship carpenters, seamen, guns, and supplies. Boston could not furnish certain guns asked for, and New York was unable to send the seamen. Meanwhile the British sloops appeared off Plattsburg, seizing or burning such property as was exposed, and then proceeded to Burlington, either to entice Macdonough into battle when he was not ready or to destroy what he had under construction. But Macdonough, anticipating a possible attack, had placed a battery at the harbor entrance, which drove off the enemy. By the end of summer Macdonough again was willing to accept the challenge; but when he sailed out with five sloops and four gunboats, the enemy retired to their stronghold in the Richelieu.

General Hampton, then in command of the military forces on Lake Champlain, repeated Dearborn's evolutions of the year before by marching north to make a junction with Wilkinson in an advance on Montreal.

Macdonough again protected the army's right flank; but Hampton turned back before reaching the border, rightly distrusting Wilkinson.

In 1814 the chief theater of operations was changed from the Great Lakes to Lake Champlain. Hearing during the winter that the British were building a brig as well as smaller vessels at Isle aux Noix, Macdonough resolved still to maintain his lead by building a small frigate. Mr. Browne, a shipbuilder sent from New York, forthwith made an enviable record in rapidity of construction: on the second of March the timbers of the *Saratoga* were standing in the forest; on the seventh of March her keel was laid; and on the eleventh of April she was launched. Browne had promised to have her in the water in the short period of sixty days; but under the energizing influence of Macdonough, who well understood the need, he cut the time by one third —forty days from living tree to man of war!

When the *Saratoga* was launched, there was a delay in equipping her. The roads at this time of year proved impassable for heavily loaded wagons. It required eighty teams to forward a single consignment of naval stores from Troy to Macdonough's base at Vergennes at the southern end of the lake; but, by dint of hard and persistent effort, guns, anchors, cables, and all other equipment were secured. There was one other need, however, that no exertion on Macdonough's part could fully meet, and this was for seamen, whom recruiting officers in Boston and New York reported themselves powerless to furnish. In his necessity Macdonough appealed to General Macomb, in command at Burlington, and borrowed several hundred soldiers, whom he proceeded to prepare for duties afloat by a kind of intensive training suggestive of Plattsburg methods of today.

The British had gained a temporary lead over the Americans in the shipbuilding race; and while Macdonough was still busy in equipping the *Saratoga* as well as the *Ticonderoga* (a sixteen-gun schooner made out of a steamer that was building on the lake), they appeared in force off Burlington and kept on to the south. Fortunately Macdonough had ample warning of their coming; and as they approached Otter Creek, which leads to Vergennes, they found a battery on the point ready for them, manned by a captain and fifty light artillerymen of the army, together with a naval contingent consisting of Lieutenant Cassin and a body of sailors. Infantry were advantageously posted to prevent the enemy's landing. Eight British gunboats, or galleys as Macdonough terms them in his report, with a bomb vessel, advanced to engage the battery, while their new brig the *Linnet* with four sloops and several gunboats stood two and a half miles distant, apparently with the idea of making a landing if the first attack were successful; but the gunboats made no impression upon the works at the mouth of the creek beyond lodging a few shot and shells in the parapet. It had been feared that they might attempt to block the mouth of the channel by sinking heavily loaded hulls there, but if there was any such intention the ample preparation made for them proved discouraging. After an engagement lasting an hour and a half they sailed north again.

Two weeks later Macdonough's force, having been completed, was assembled off Plattsburg. Now it was the enemy's turn to go into hiding and soon to begin another ship. This, with their superior stores and equipment, they planned to make the largest naval unit on the lake—the frigate *Confiance*, mounting thirty-

seven guns. They were preparing for a vigorous campaign in the fall. Macdonough either did not know the full extent of their ambitious plans or else was unable to match them, for he completed during the same period only a brig, the *Eagle*, mounting twenty guns.

Again and again he had sailed to the northern end of the lake and seriously considered an attack upon the British squadron before it should be increased. The British, however, had chosen a position where they had the support of a land battery and a large scow mounting heavy guns; further, the position put an attacking force at a great disadvantage because of the shallow water and the narrow channel. Macdonough, though eager for an engagement, came to the conclusion that it would be "hazardous for me to approach them with the ship. . . . I would gain nothing, but lose a great deal."

Even in war there occur some pleasantries; and the exchange of notes at this time between Captain Fisher, commanding the British squadron, and Macdonough must have relieved some tedious moments. It began with a communication of the English commander:

> Captain Fisher begs the honor of presenting his compliments to Commodore Macdonough. He is extremely sorry that he gave him the trouble of sending all his flotilla after him this morning, but as the gunboats of the squadrons are about equal there can be no difficulty in trying their strength on any morning between Point au Fer and Wind Mill Point. . . .

It appears from the latter part of his note that he himself had come in the morning with a flag of truce, hoping to meet Macdonough and probably to make arrangements for an engagement that should be limited to gunboats.

Macdonough replied with equal courtesy, though it must be admitted that in form he was a bit out of practice. In the middle he unwittingly changed from the formal third person, which Captain Fisher had used, to the informal first person, and ends,

> I am with sentiments of high respect
> Your mo. ob. hum. servt.
> T. Macdonough.

Macdonough did not accept the challenge, for, as he knew, the Americans would have had the odds against them, the British having a greater number of gunboats. War with him was not a sport or an affair of honor. Undoubtedly, however, he laughed over the blarney conveyed in Fisher's reply:

> . . . For the rest, if all we hear is correct, I am afraid you are entirely outbuilding us. I avail myself of this opportunity to send you the latest Montreal newspaper and also some English ones, which, tho' old, I believe are the latest that have reached this country; and if at any time I can execute here any little personal commission for yourself it will afford me much pleasure. . . .

The English certainly had reason, from what was happening every day, to think that the Americans were not serious in carrying on war. One night in July four spars which were being towed down the lake toward Canada were captured by an American midshipman when already across the line; they were presumably the mainmast and three topmasts for the British frigate. A little later a large raft was seized by Macdonough's gunboats; it was made up of planks and spars and loaded with twenty-seven barrels of tar, with six or eight American citizens in charge, who were taking

this to the British. It is painful to reflect that two thirds of the fresh beef consumed by the British Army in Canada came from Vermont and northern New York, cattle being driven in droves by the American farmers across the border to the best market.

The year 1814 was the critical year of the war. It was marked by the offensive taken by the British and by the internal weakness shown by the United States. A lull in the Napoleonic wars had released large forces for the conflict in America, and upward of fifteen thousand of Wellington's Peninsular Army had been transported to Canada. The naval contingent also had been greatly strengthened and was enforcing the blockade with increasing strictness. Besides the large expedition that moved at will up and down the Chesapeake, burning Washington and sacking Alexandria, another expedition seized the fort at Castine, Maine, and, with only a show of force, induced the inhabitants of the country east of the Penobscot to renew their allegiance to the English crown. These operations had been such easy successes that there is little wonder the British looked forward with great confidence upon two others—an invasion of New York by way of Plattsburg and Lake Champlain and the capture of New Orleans. These were England's preparations for a peace treaty of her own making.

This was serious enough, even if there had been a united Republic to meet them; but, as England knew, the government showed signs of weakness and disunion beyond anything in its previous history. President Madison had predicted that when the flag was unfurled in war the people would rush forward to its defense; but the great mass of citizens continued to go as usual about their farming, their buying and selling; they

seemed unconscious of the existence of war. There was no money in the Treasury; there were next to no regulars in the army; and the militia, on which the administration had pinned its hopes at the beginning of the war, proved less and less reliable. As a matter of fact, in 1814 Massachusetts and Connecticut withdrew their militia from the last vestige of Federal control. The unpopular war was contemptuously spoken of as "Mr. Madison's war." Even before its beginning New England had talked of separation from the Union, and in 1814 sent delegates to Hartford as the first step toward forming a New England confederacy. It is no wonder that England thought the time had come for lively campaigning and a successful peace drive.

Early in September of 1814, then, General Prevost with from ten thousand to fourteen thousand troops, many of them Wellington's veterans, slowly moved across the border and toward Plattsburg. The Americans had prepared in his path several positions by which they might at least have delayed his advance, had not orders that admitted of no discretion on the part of the recipient come from the War Department requiring General Izard with four thousand regulars to proceed from Plattsburg to Sacketts Harbor,—and this in the latter part of August when a battle at Plattsburg was almost in sight. General Macomb at once concentrated his force, fifteen hundred effective regulars, together with New York and Vermont militia, at Plattsburg. The odds were heavily against him; but with the assistance of an engineer officer, a graduate of the newly established Military Academy at West Point, he used the short time to make the most of his position behind the Saranac River, where he had determined to dispute the progress of the enemy.

To make his campaign successful it was absolutely necessary for Prevost to have the support of the British squadron, now commanded by Captain George Downie; and this squadron must hold undisputed control of the lake. Scarcely had the *Confiance* taken the water when Prevost began his forward movement. It was only sixteen days after she slipped off her ways that she was engaged in the battle which was to decide all. Even two days before the battle, mechanics had still not completed their work; as the first lieutenant reported, artificers were then employed "fitting beds, coins, belaying pins, etc." Meanwhile the British Army slowly and rather carelessly advanced by two roads, driving the American skirmishers before them into Plattsburg. On the beach road near that city, however, they were abruptly halted by a galling fire from the American gunboats, which held their position until the enemy's artillery was brought forward.

Macdonough had decided to compel the enemy to take the initiative and make the attack in Plattsburg Bay. Judged by any ordinary standard, as he knew, the British were superior. They had 16 craft to his 14 and 92 guns to his 86, with crews of corresponding proportions. Furthermore, the *Confiance*, a frigate of about 1200 tons burden mounting 37 guns, not only was more than a match for the *Saratoga* of 734 tons with 26 guns, but, because of her unusual number of long guns opposed to the American carronades, was indeed a fair match for Macdonough's entire squadron, provided that she met her adversaries in the open lake where she could maneuver to outrange them.

Plattsburg Bay extends from north to south, a pocket partly closed by Cumberland Head on the northeast and Crab Island on the southeast, the en-

trance, which is about two miles and a half wide, being toward the south. The prevailing winds on the lake are from the north or the south. The advantage of Macdonough's position lay in the fact that if the British came down on a north wind to the scene of action, as was most likely, they would find it slow and somewhat difficult to come about and enter the bay with the wind unfavorable; the lake vessels, because of their shallow draft, were dull sailers when going close to the wind. Moreover, the inclosed position would compel the British in attacking him to come into close action where their superiority in long guns would be largely lost.

Macdonough had taken his position and had everything ready on the eighth of September. His last precaution was to attach springs to his cables so that if necessary in battle to "wind" the ship, or turn her, he could do so, independent of sail power. The strongest units of his squadron were arranged in column from north to south, the brig *Eagle* being at the van toward Cumberland Head, followed by the frigate *Saratoga*, the schooner *Ticonderoga*, and the sloop *Preble*. The ten gunboats were placed at intervals inshore of the large vessels.

Early on the morning of 11 September, 1814, the American force could see the first of the enemy approaching, with the wind from the northeast. Captain Downie had been informed by Prevost of the exact number and arrangement of the American squadron, and he had planned his attack accordingly. The *Confiance*, relying on her great strength, was to lead the British in and sail to the head of the American column; then, coming about, she was to deliver a heavy fire on the *Eagle* as she passed, and anchor across the bow

of the *Saratoga*. The brig *Linnet* was to follow and, with the sloop *Chub*, engage the *Eagle*. The sloop *Finch* and twelve gunboats were to attack the rear of the American squadron. When the first ships of the British came opposite the bay, however, not being in the desired formation, they hove to; and Downie arranged his battle line.

The hours of waiting in the American force were anxious ones. The officers had made no effort by idle boasting to conceal the fact of the British superiority; but the calm, determined spirit of their leader had been remarkably contagious. Every officer, sailor, and soldier in the squadron was determined to fight to the last. As the British were standing in toward the bay, Macdonough, with his officers about him on the flagship, knelt and repeated the prayer of the Episcopal Church "to be said before a fight at sea."

The fate of the campaign and perhaps of America hinged on this engagement. Macdonough, realizing this at least in part, felt that his own strength was not enough; simple, as he always was, and deeply moved, he acted as he had been taught by his devoted mother.

The *Eagle* fired her long guns at the slowly approaching foe, but the shot fell short. Macdonough, noting this, held his fire. Finally, about five minutes before nine, he fired a long 24-pounder of the *Saratoga*, which he trained himself. True to its mark, the shot entered near the port hawse-hole of the *Confiance* and ranged the length of the ship. The *Confiance* made no reply. She gave a fine exhibition of discipline, but as she came under the lee of Cumberland Head her progress became more painful. Shot after shot from the *Saratoga* and the *Eagle* was piercing her hull and severely testing the British powers of endurance.

Finally, when the port bower and spare anchor in the fore chains had been shot away, Downie gave up the attempt to reach the desired position and, dropping anchor three hundred yards off the *Saratoga's* starboard beam, gave orders to begin firing. The first broadside of the British, fired at point-blank range with every gun carefully aimed, was sharply felt on the *Saratoga.* It is said that more than a fifth of her crew fell, and that the whole ship quivered.

The *Linnet* and the *Chub,* sailing close after the *Confiance,* according to program, attacked the *Eagle.* The little British sloop, however, was playing a game with those beyond her class; with rigging shot to pieces she drifted down the American line and surrendered after a single shot from the *Saratoga.* She and the *Finch* were the sloops captured from Macdonough's lieutenant two years previously. There was added satisfaction for Americans that day in bringing them both back to their proper allegiance. On the *Confiance* a great disaster occurred fifteen minutes after the beginning of the engagement, when the commander of the British squadron, the gallant Captain Downie, was struck by a gun dismounted by a shot from the *Saratoga* and instantly killed.

The fighting everywhere, except on certain of the British gunboats which kept their distance, was of the most stubborn nature. At 10.30 the *Eagle,* being unable to use several of her starboard guns and finding the fire of the *Linnet,* with an occasional shot from the *Confiance,* too hot for her, spread her topsails and dropped down to a position between the *Saratoga* and the *Ticonderoga*; then, bringing her port broadside into play, she fired at the *Confiance* without being subject to a return fire. This left the *Linnet,* however, entirely

free, and she worked forward to a raking position off the *Saratoga's* bow, so that the American flagship now had to meet the concentrated attack of both ships. Their combined superiority in broadside guns, as they entered the battle, was twenty-seven to the *Saratoga's* thirteen. Gun after gun on the engaged side of the *Saratoga* was disabled by shot of the enemy or by reason of overcharging. Macdonough, who was everywhere trying to put organization and fight into his comparatively new crew, even at times aiming some of the cannon, twice was hit by débris and felled to the deck, once being knocked senseless by a broken spar. But he fought with the same spirit with which he prayed, and he had no thought of defeat.

The fire of both flagships was now weakening; indeed, nearly every gun of the *Saratoga's* starboard battery had been rendered useless. Only some quick maneuver could save the day for the American frigate. Letting go his stern anchor and cutting his bow cable, Macdonough proceeded to wind ship: he first hauled on the spring which had been led from his starboard quarter to a kedge anchor well off the starboard bow, the northerly wind assisting by throwing the head over; and when the stern was brought up, he completed the turning by hauling on the spring led to a kedge originally off the other bow. By this method he was soon back in the fight again, practically without changing his berth, and he had an entirely fresh broadside bearing.

This expedient of winding ship, which had succeeded because of Macdonough's forethought and careful preparation, won the battle. For some time conditions on the *Confiance* had been bad. Her great guns, which at the beginning of the battle had been leveled for point-blank range and had been terribly effective, as the

fighting grew more desperate were shooting above their target: the quoins had become loosened and the pieces elevated, a fact which the gunners failed to notice and correct. Furthermore, as the *Saratoga* renewed the battle with all thirteen guns of her port broadside, the *Confiance* had but four guns still serviceable to oppose her. Lieutenant Robertson, who had succeeded Captain Downie in command, tried to imitate Macdonough's maneuver, but he had not the assistance of springs to port and starboard. The result of his effort was that the *Confiance* swung only halfway and there hung exposed to the fire of her opponent, without ability to reply. She had so many holes in her hull that she was taking water badly; the wounded had been moved more than once to keep them from drowning. When finally a raking shot from the *Saratoga* entered and killed several men, "the ship's company," according to Lieutenant Robertson, "declared they would stand no longer to their quarters, nor could the officers with their utmost exertions rally them." There was nothing left for Robertson to do but to haul down his colors. This he did at 11 o'clock.

Immediately Macdonough transferred his attention to the *Linnet*. Winding the *Saratoga* a little farther, he brought his engaged broadside to bear on the doughty brig that for a half-hour had been, to put it mildly, excessively annoying. Lieutenant Pring, commanding her, knew that he was no match; but he held out, hoping that the gunboats might see his plight and, towing him out of the bay, give him a chance of escape. It happened, however, that the four British gunboats which took part in the action had been hard handled by the *Ticonderoga* in their attempts to board her. The rest already were fleeing. At 11.15 Lieutenant Pring

yielded to the inevitable and hauled down his colors. The sloop *Finch* meanwhile had drifted on Crab Island, and on being attacked by a gun manned by invalid sailors from the hospital there, quickly lowered her flag.

The formal surrender took place on the deck of the *Saratoga,* where four British commanding officers proceeded to give up their swords. An eye-witness writes as follows:

> As they stepped upon the deck of the *Saratoga* they met Commodore Macdonough, who kindly bowed to them, while they, holding their caps in their left hands and their swords, by the blades, in their right, advanced toward him and, bowing, presented the weapons. The commodore bowed and said: "Gentlemen, return your swords into your scabbards and wear them. You are worthy of them." And having obeyed the order, arm in arm, with their swords by their sides, they walked the deck of their conqueror.

The American gunboats were summoned to assist in removing the British prisoners to Crab Island and the wounded of both sides to the hospital Macdonough had placed there. Lieutenant Vallette was given this duty; and even after more than a hundred years one cannot fail to catch the sympathy and gentleness which lay in Macdonough's quaint instructions: "Treat them kindly." "Speak to them encouragingly." That the British were conscious of this is recorded in the letter of Lieutenant Robertson of the *Confiance* to Macdonough:

> I am requested by the surviving officers of H.M. late Ship *Confiance* to express to you how sensibly they feel indebted to your unbounded liberality and humane attention not only extended to themselves but to the unfortunate wounded seamen and marines, whose sufferings have been alleviated to the utmost that circumstances would permit. . . .

A similar letter was written by officers of the *Linnet*; and Lieutenant Pring, the senior officer of the squadron after the death of Downie, yet again referred to "the humane treatment the wounded have received" when writing to Sir James Yeo. Macdonough had won a second victory.

A half-hour after the *Linnet* had hauled down her colors, a gig left the *Saratoga* bearing the following dispatch, which carried the good tidings to anxious Washington:

U.S. Ship *Saratoga*,
Off Plattsburg, September 11th, 1814.

Sir:

The Almighty has been pleased to grant us a signal victory on Lake Champlain in the capture of one Frigate, one Brig, and two Sloops-of-war of the enemy.

I have the honor to be

Very respectfully
Sir, your obt. servt.
T. Macdonough, Com'g.

Hon'ble W. Jones,
Secretary of the Navy.

The losses on the *Saratoga* were 28 killed, 29 wounded; on the *Confiance* about 50 killed and 60 wounded. A merely casual observation of the two frigates showed how desperate and determined had been the fight: the *Saratoga* had received 55 round shot in her hull; the *Confiance* 105. "Yet," as Henry Adams remarks, "at the end of two hours' combat the British squadron was on the whole victorious, and the American on the point of capture." Both ends of the American column had been turned, and for the time being the flagship was silenced. It was the intelligence, quickness, and courage of the American officers that won the battle. Mac-

donough had foreseen just what the exigencies of the morning would be and had made his preparations. In the battle he had suffered sharp reverses, but the reverses were only smarting blows that made him fight more determinedly. For such a spirit, battle had only one conclusion, and that was victory.

In these pages there is no attempt to give a comprehensive account of the activities of the navy. Neither Decatur nor Macdonough, nor any other of the officers who made the navy famous in the War of 1812, could have done his work without the coöperation of hundreds and thousands of other real Americans. To suggest what the navy did to bring peace, mention, at least, must be made of David Porter and his extensive work in the Atlantic and Pacific. His exploits were performed in the little frigate *Essex*. Especially off the west coast of South America he wrought havoc on the British shipping, capturing or driving from the sea all whaling vessels there. In the end he was outmatched by the superior force the British sent against him, but that was not until 1814, when he had done his work. David Farragut was a young midshipman with Porter; and more of Porter's service will be told later in connection with Farragut's career.

Another name, the mention of which always awakens enthusiasm, is that of James Lawrence. He gained one of the cleanest-cut victories of the war when his sloop *Hornet* captured the *Peacock* in fifteen minutes. Later, when in command of the frigate *Chesapeake*, he was lured into fighting a ship duel with the *Shannon*. At that time his crew was new and unorganized, whereas that of the *Shannon* had been long at sea and was unusually well-trained and officered. The nation suffered a double loss that day when an American

frigate was taken and her captain mortally wounded. Yet very few men who lived on for half a century longer left a richer legacy than did Lawrence by his dying words, "Don't give up the ship." The battle had gone against him, but his soul was unconquerable.

The sloops of war and privateers, though never taking part in major operations, had an appreciable influence on the result. The sloops were the light cruisers of the period. Although the British frigates were able eventually to seal up most of the American frigates by closely blockading the ports, the nimble sloops passed in and out until the end of the war. They preyed upon the British commerce on every part of the Atlantic, and a few bold captains like Johnston Blakely conducted their operations even in the English Channel. The privateers, easily converted from the fast merchantmen, gave the British especial annoyance. Some were not less bold than the sloops of war, and the waters about the West Indies, the Canaries, France, Ireland, and England itself were infested by them. France had tried privateering in the recent wars only to have her depredations promptly checked; but the American privateers, like the German submarines of a century later, defied the British Admiralty and brought disagreeably home to all merchants the fact of the war's long continuation. The British "Annual Register" for 1814 recorded as a "most mortifying reflection" that, with a navy of nearly a thousand ships and while at peace with the nations of Europe, "it was not safe for a vessel to sail without convoy from one part of the English or Irish Channel to another."[1]

In 1814 the war was becoming distinctly unpopular in England. Immediately after the defeat of their

[1] Quoted by Adams in his "History of the United States," Vol. VIII, p. 197.

fleet on Lake Champlain, Prevost had retreated with his army to Canada, with such precipitancy as to abandon stores and even leave his wounded to the mercies of the American Army. In its mortification the English government appealed to the Duke of Wellington to take command in America, but he was not encouraging or interested. He remarked, "I have told the ministers repeatedly that a naval superiority on the Lakes is a *sine qua non* of success in war on the frontier of Canada, even if our object should be wholly defensive."

All this combined to change the original instructions with which the commissioners representing Great Britain met the American commissioners at Ghent. They had at first expected to compel the United States to "rectify the boundary" by surrendering the eastern part of Maine to Great Britain, by creating a huge buffer state in the Northwest to be devoted to Indians, and by relinquishing any share in the control of the Great Lakes. The ministry made a mistake in choosing as their negotiators men who were virtually unknown and of mediocre ability. Washington, on the other hand, sent a remarkable group of men: Gallatin, John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay, Bayard, and Russell. So although in military affairs during 1814 the British generals had much the better of it, in the peace conference just the opposite happened: it was the American representatives who outmaneuvered their opponents.

The British, however, had for some time known of the strong factions in America. Thus it is not strange that they purposely delayed matters so that they might have the advantage to be gained from Prevost's success in New York. When news came of his dismal

failure, the aspect of the peace conference changed very perceptibly. England gave up her demands for territory; and America, for her part, agreed to say nothing about impressment and illegal blockades, the alleged reasons for going to war.

A few in the United States may have looked upon the treaty with disappointment,— after four years of war nothing gained and nothing lost,— but the great mass of people celebrated the coming of peace with eager enthusiasm. The separation movement faded away into thin air; and the political party that had opposed the war, and in its radical wing had urged the dissolving of the Union, fell into such disfavor that it was deserted like a sinking ship. Nothing gained and nothing lost! Soon, however, the more astute observers noticed, as the war clouds blew away, that something new had come, and that was nationality. Miserable factions which from the very beginning had assailed the administration, sparing not even Washington, selfish and often dishonest, had lost their power; citizens of good repute recognized their true character and declined to give them further support.

No one has given a better statement of the result of the war than Gallatin, writing in 1816:

> The war has been productive of evil and of good, but I think the good preponderates. Independent of the loss of lives, and of the property of individuals, the war has laid the foundations of permanent taxes and military establishments, which the Republicans had deemed unfavorable to the happiness and free institutions of the country. But under our former system we were becoming too selfish, too much attached exclusively to the acquisition of wealth, above all too much confined in our political feelings to local and state affairs. The war has renewed and reinstated the national

feeling and character which the Revolution had given, and which were daily lessening. The people have now more general objects of attachment, with which their pride and political opinions are connected. They are more Americans; they feel and act more as a nation: and I hope that the permanency of the Union is thereby better secured.

It is almost needless, after what has been related in the last two chapters, to call attention to the important part played by the navy in accomplishing this great result, American nationality. In a period of discouragement the navy showed the country that Americans could fight; it embarrassed the enemy in their operations and was instrumental in causing the failure of their leading campaigns; it aroused pride and enthusiasm because of its achievements. Its victories were made the subjects of songs which were sung all over the country and which lasted so long in the Service that Admiral Luce, a midshipman in the forties, says that it was through hearing them that he learned his naval history.

In thus establishing naval tradition on a firm and enduring basis, what was Macdonough's part?

He gave an example of doing the task assigned, quietly and without discussion. He knew in 1812, when he arrived at Lake Champlain, that there was no squadron, next to no men to build one, and no supplies within easy reach. But he went to work and nearly always at critical moments was a little ahead of his enemy.

He gave an example of careful, intelligent, and thorough preparation. This preparation extended through 1812, 1813, and 1814; and without this persistence he never could have appeared on the lake in 1814 to dispute the progress of the British.

After making such preparation he gave an example of how to fight. No one ever threw himself into battle with more determination. The struggle in which he was leader was fought but for one ending.

Macdonough gave an example, further, of pure living and high thinking. He was deeply religious; and no one ever criticized his religion. He was thoughtful and unselfish. He never left a ship, either as first lieutenant or captain, that the officers and men did not realize that their best friend had been detached; on two occasions they expressed their warm feeling by a joint letter; on another they presented him with a sword.

Of course he had no connection with the Naval Academy, founded twenty years after his death. Yet who can see his name on the new gymnasium of that institution without feeling the fitness of placing it there! Like Sir Galahad of old, Macdonough stands as a symbol of strength and purity.

He was not insensible of the strain incident to his service on Lake Champlain, where unremitting toil was carried on through the severe northern Vermont winters; and in the fall of 1814, when nearly all danger was past, he asked to be relieved. The Navy Department gave him another assignment for a few weeks, but, hearing of British activity, recalled him to his old billet. Thus his duty on the lake, which began in 1812, continued till after peace in 1815. Macdonough was an officer who never complained of what was assigned him; but, as often happens in the navy, the duty just mentioned involved personal sacrifice. Ten years after the war, when he was still young, he ended a cruise on the *Constitution* in the Mediterranean to go home a sick man. He died at sea of pulmonary consumption, the result of his arduous labors in saving the nation.

CHAPTER V

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY (1794–1858)

PERRY, whose service in the navy covers forty-nine years, had an excellent record throughout, but won his greatest fame by diplomacy in the Far East, to which he gave between two and three years near the end of his life. It is to what the navy has done in diplomacy that the thought of this chapter, as well as of Chapter XV, will be directed.

No history of American diplomacy, if it begins with the earliest years, should omit the name of John Paul Jones. He won warm friends among the French and the Dutch by his convincing words and charming manners, as well as by his victories, thus rendering a service to be linked with that of Franklin and of Adams. At the close of the war he was appointed agent to secure the settlement of claims based on the sale of American prizes sent in to European ports.

When trouble with the Barbary states followed at the beginning of the nineteenth century, American naval officers were called upon not only to do the fighting but to lay the foundations upon which peaceful relations might be established. Preble, Decatur, Rodgers, and Bainbridge should be recognized for their services in both fields. The last two, with others, were further responsible for the treaty with Turkey, then a power deserving important consideration.

The most brilliant work of the naval diplomats, however, was in the Orient. Kearny in China, Perry in

Japan, and Shufeldt in Korea not only prepared the way for American commercial interests in a new field but won world-wide prestige for the United States.

Between 1830 and 1840 two American naval vessels each year had visited certain points in the East, but neither officers nor ships had received any recognition from the Chinese government. A few of our merchant vessels, however, were carrying on trade, chiefly in smuggling opium, a traffic which they found highly profitable, as did the British. At the same time the possibilities of legitimate commerce were recognized by those best informed. Thus, when in 1842 Commodore Lawrence Kearny with the *Constellation* and the *Boston* arrived at Macao and heard of England's success in the so-called "opium war," he saw that the time was ripe for action. He dispatched the *Boston* home with a copy of the favorable treaty which England had obtained, and sent copies also by two other channels.

However, instead of waiting for instructions from Washington he boldly addressed a communication to Viceroy Ke, minor guardian of the heir apparent, president of the board of war, and governor of two provinces. In this, using the formal and courteous tone of the East, he began, "The address of Commodore Kearny, commander in chief of a squadron of United States ships." The squadron now consisted of just one vessel, the *Constellation*, built half a century before. After stating the friendly attitude of his country, he continued:

> The undersigned is desirous that the attention of the Imperial government might be called with respect to the commercial interest of the United States, and he hopes the importance of their trade will receive consideration, and their citizens, in that matter, be placed upon the same footing as the merchants of the nation most favored.

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

It happened that Kearny had already come to the attention of the viceroy because of the firm and just stand he had taken with regard to some outrages visited the previous year upon Americans near Canton; and when he fearlessly sailed from Macao to Canton for an answer to his message, he received one that was most favorable. In the conclusion, almost hidden by the stately verbiage characteristic of the Orient, was the gratifying assurance:

> Decidedly it shall not be permitted that the American merchants shall come to have merely a dry stick [in other words, their interests shall be attended to] . . . that Chinese and foreigners with faith and justice may be mutually united, and forever enjoy reciprocal tranquillity. . . .

Kearny further made a favorable impression by volunteering the assurance that the United States would not protect her merchants engaged in smuggling opium. There is no doubt that he was largely responsible for the proclamation issued a few months later giving to the United States and other nations the same commercial privileges that were granted to Great Britain by the Treaty of Nanking. China had opened her port and taken her place among the nations.

Matthew Calbraith Perry had made a name for himself in the Service long before going to Japan. His father was a sea captain, who, though only fourteen at the beginning of the Revolution, had fought all through it, being twice captured. Five of the captain's sons became American naval officers, the two most famous being Oliver Hazard Perry, the victor on Lake Erie, and Matthew Calbraith Perry, nine years his junior, the subject of this sketch.

As we glance over the career of Matthew Calbraith Perry we note that as a young officer, engaged in recruiting duty at Boston, he led in organizing the first naval-apprentice system of the United States. At the New York Navy Yard he superintended the building of the *Fulton* (the second ship of this name), a paddle-wheel steamer, the first steam vessel with hull of ordinary type built for the navy. On completion of this ship he was detailed to command her and had as his problem the organizing and training of the personnel, a problem which, because of the new type, necessitated pioneer work. Further, he had the planning of the first steam frigates of the navy, the *Missouri* and the *Mississippi*. Because of the excellence of this service he was dubbed the "Father of the Steam Navy." In the Mexican War, at the critical point of operations before Vera Cruz, he was ordered to relieve Commodore Conner. There he had command of the largest force ever assembled up to that time under the American flag, and the spirited coöperation of army and navy soon resulted in the capture of Vera Cruz, a preliminary to the march upon Mexico City. Thus there were good reasons for the Department's selecting him in 1852 to command the proposed expedition to Japan.

Many events prompted this enterprise. Negotiations, as described, had resulted in a treaty with China, and it was characteristic of young America, having succeeded, to go a step farther (or nearer) and attempt what Great Britain, France, Portugal, and Russia had failed to accomplish. If American merchantmen in stress of weather or American steamships in need of coal found themselves in difficulty off Japanese ports, it was desirable that crews should not court death by entering. The discovery of gold in California had called large

numbers of our people to the Western coast, and commerce with the Far East had at once assumed greater importance. Furthermore, there had been influences at work in Japan: her people, or at least the leaders, had heard of the British victory in China and they had been impressed by the American success in Mexico; they were beginning to have an interest in Western ideas.

Already our government had taken cautious steps toward a treaty with Japan, the most important being in 1846, when Commodore Biddle with the *Columbus* and the *Vincennes* entered the Bay of Yedo. Admiral Luce, then a midshipman, was a member of this expedition; and the story will be found in the chapter on that officer. To Biddle's proposal of friendly relations the Japanese had replied, "Go away and do not come back any more."

The Navy Department had promised Perry a large squadron for his expedition. A few of the ships were already in the East. While waiting for the other ships to be put into condition, he used the time to good advantage by procuring charts and books relating to Japan, and also by obtaining specimens of cloth from manufacturers in Massachusetts, and farm implements, arms, and inventions, showing American mechanical genius, from various sources. Further, at New Bedford he talked with owners and masters of whaling vessels, gaining such information as they could give from their cruises in waters adjacent to Japan. These careful preparations he was to make good use of later.

Before his departure the government gave him various official documents, including a letter to the emperor of Japan signed by President Fillmore. The State Department instructed him to attempt first by argument

and persuasion to secure the object of his mission, but in case these proved ineffective to change his tone and warn Japan that America would chastise offenders and exact a penalty when her citizens seeking refuge in Japanese ports because of shipwreck or stress of weather were not treated humanely.

Delays continued, and the large squadron gave no sign of being ready. Finally, in November, 1852, Perry would wait no longer and sailed with but a single ship, the *Mississippi*. The start was made from Annapolis, and the President and the Secretary of the Navy came down to see him off. Newspapers at home and abroad had apparently no faith in the enterprise and indulged in many a joke. The London *Times* wondered "whether the emperor of Japan would receive Commodore Perry with most indignation or most contempt." The Baltimore *Sun* compared the sailing of Perry's squadron to the sailing of "Rufus Porter's aërial ship" and urged "abandoning this humbug."

Perry on reaching China engaged Dr. S. W. Williams, an American missionary, to accompany him as interpreter. Here he continued his study of Japanese history, manners, and customs. Also he added to his command such ships as were available, and thus had the steam frigates *Susquehanna* and *Mississippi* and the sloops of war *Saratoga* and *Plymouth*.

On the 8th of July, 1853, the squadron moved slowly up the Bay of Yedo and dropped anchor off Uraga, twenty-seven miles from the capital, Yedo (Tokyo). This being the first appearance of steamers in the Bay of Yedo, great was the astonishment of the natives to see the huge ships approaching directly against the wind. A cordon of small boats soon surrounded the vessels; and curious natives, catching at the chains,

attempted to clamber on board. This and many other liberties had been allowed in the past by foreigners; but now the Japanese were shown, with a suggestion of force, that they must keep off. Perry had already decided on his policy, and in coming to the exclusive nation had determined to outdo them in exclusiveness. He strictly forbade communication with the natives except from the flagship. When the vice governor of Uraga appeared in a boat and an interpreter declared his rank, he was kept waiting until he had explained why he, and not the governor, had come; and when the gangway was lowered and the dignitary came on board, he was by no means permitted to see the commodore. Perry, because of his rank as the great ambassador of the President, would meet no one less than a "counselor of the Empire" (cabinet minister). However, Lieutenant Contee, acting as Perry's representative, informed the vice governor of the friendly mission on which the Americans had come and of the letter written by the President to the emperor, which Commodore Perry would deliver with appropriate formalities. The vice governor, as related in the official account of the expedition by Dr. Hawks, at once stated that "Nagasaki was the only place, according to the laws of Japan, for negotiating foreign business, and it would be necessary for the squadron to go there." To this "he was told that the commodore had come purposely to Uraga because it was near to Yedo, and that he *should not go to Nagasaki*; that he expected the letter to be duly and properly received where he then was; that his intentions were perfectly friendly, but that he would allow of no indignity."

Perry had no intention of using force unless he were attacked; yet, that he might be prepared for emer-

gency, he had already cleared decks and begun drilling the crews as in time of war. It was a period of uncertainty, and the excitement on shore, as described later by a Japanese, Professor Nitobe, was extreme. This other point of view is shown by his account:

> No sooner had "the black ships of the evil mien" made their entry into the bay, than the signal guns were fired, followed by the discharge of rockets; then were seen on the shore companies of soldiers moving from garrison to garrison. The popular commotion in Yedo at the news of "a foreign invasion." was beyond description. The whole city was in an uproar. In all directions were seen mothers flying with children in their arms, and men with mothers on their backs. Rumors of an immediate action, exaggerated each time they were communicated from mouth to mouth, added horror to the horror-stricken. The tramp of war-horses, the clatter of armed warriors, the noise of carts, the parade of firemen, the incessant tolling of bells, the shrieks of women, the cries of children, dinning all the streets of a city of more than a million souls, made confusion worse confounded.

When at seven o'clock the next morning two large boats came alongside the *Susquehanna* bringing the governor of Uraga, again the exclusive commodore would not treat with an official beneath his rank, but delegated Captains Buchanan and Adams to confer with him. The new conferee at once urged "Nagasaki"; but, as before, this met with an emphatic refusal. The captains declared that the commodore "would persist in delivering the letter where he was; and, moreover, that if the Japanese government did not see fit to appoint a suitable person to receive the documents in his possession addressed to the emperor, he, the commodore, whose duty it was to deliver them, would go on shore with a sufficient force and deliver them in

person, be the consequences what they might." The governor then said it would be necessary to send to Yedo for instructions. This, he said, would require four days; he was told that the commodore would wait only three. On leaving, the governor asked what the ships' boats, busily engaged since daylight in surveying the harbor and bay, were doing. When told, he strongly protested, for it was against the Japanese law. The uncompromising reply was "that the American laws command them, and that Americans were as much bound to obey the American as he was to obey the Japanese laws."

Perry was holding to the policy decided upon, believing "that the more exclusive he should make himself and the more unyielding he might be in adhering to his declared intentions, the more respect these people of forms and ceremonies would be disposed to award him." Thus it happened that on the day following the governor's visit, Sunday, when several mandarins came to make an unofficial visit, Perry, who from boyhood had been very strict in Sabbath observance, refused to permit them to come on board.

As can be imagined, the proposals taken to Yedo by the governor of Uraga had the effect of an earthquake; and the Japanese, in spite of their strong feeling against foreigners, were distinctly impressed by Perry's firmness and power. They feared that if they resisted he might land and, by dwelling in the Holy Country, defile it. The ruling dynasty, moreover, was none too strong, and dreaded a clash lest it might be the signal for revolution.

Of the internal conditions Perry had no knowledge, and he was much relieved by the governor's returning on the appointed day with the assurance that the President's letter would be received with fitting ceremonies.

Two days later (14 July, 1853), shortly before eight o'clock, the *Susquehanna* and the *Mississippi* steamed down the bay and inshore toward a large and highly decorated reception hall which the Japanese had quickly erected. At a signal from the flagship three hundred officers, sailors, and marines, filling fifteen launches and cutters, moved toward the shore. A salute of thirteen guns from the *Susquehanna*, echoing and reëchoing among the hills, gave notice when the august ambassador of the President upon whom no Japanese eye had yet gazed was embarking in his barge.

On the arrival of the commodore, his suite of officers formed a double line along the landing place, and as he passed up between, they fell into order behind him. The procession was then formed and took up its march toward the house of reception, the route to which was pointed out by Kayama Yezaiman [the governor of Uraga] and his interpreter, who preceded the party. The marines led the way, and, the sailors following, the commodore was duly escorted up the beach. The United States flag and the broad pennant were borne by two athletic seamen, who had been selected from the crews of the squadron on account of their stalwart proportions. Two boys, dressed for the ceremony, preceded the commodore, bearing in an envelope of scarlet cloth the boxes which contained his credentials and the President's letter. These documents, of folio size, were beautifully written on vellum, and not folded, but bound in blue silk velvet. Each seal, attached by cord of interwoven gold and silk with pendent gold tassels, was encased in a circular box six inches in diameter and three in depth, wrought of pure gold. Each of the documents, together with its seal, was placed in a box of rosewood about a foot long, with lock, hinges, and mountings of gold. On either side of the commodore marched a tall, well-formed negro, who, armed to the teeth, acted as his personal guard.

These negroes, the pick of the squadron, were giants in stature and attracted great attention from the Japanese, who had never seen blacks before. The pomp and parade, carefully planned for effect, seem to have been highly successful.

As Perry and his suite entered the reception hall, magnificent in its hangings of violet-colored silk and fine cotton, two princes, who were seated on the left, rose, bowed, and then resumed their seats. They had been appointed by the government to receive the documents, and their dignity was appalling: during the entire interview they sat with statuesque formality, uttering not a word nor making a gesture.

The complete ceremonies occupied not more than a half-hour. For some minutes after the commodore had taken his seat there was absolute silence, broken finally by the Japanese interpreter asking the American interpreter if the letters were ready for delivery and stating that the princes were ready to receive them.

The commodore, upon this being communicated to him, beckoned to the boys, who stood in the lower hall, to advance, when they immediately obeyed his summons and came forward, bearing the handsome boxes which contained the President's letter and other documents. The two stalwart negroes followed immediately in rear of the boys, and marching up to the scarlet receptacle prepared by the Japanese for the letters, received the boxes from the hands of the bearers, opened them, took out the letters, and, displaying the writings and seals, laid them upon the lid of the Japanese box — all in perfect silence.

The commodore then directed his interpreter to inform the Japanese that he should leave in two or three days, but would return the following spring for an answer. When they inquired if he should return

with all four vessels, he gave the assurance, "All of them and probably more, as these are only a portion of the squadron." After a further impressive silence and a repetition of the formal bowing with which the conference had begun, Perry took his departure.

The Japanese, at the close of the conference, had virtually ordered that the ships should leave the bay at once; but Perry, to show how little he regarded their orders, instead instructed the squadron to get under way and steam ten miles up the bay toward Yedo. Then, not content with this, he took the *Mississippi* and went ten miles still higher, to within seven miles of the capital. The governor of Uraga soon made another visit to the *Susquehanna* and twice, Perry observes in his official report, he volunteered a "prediction of the favorable reception of the President's letter. Nothing was said now of sending the answer to Nagasaki, and it seemed the nearer we approached the imperial city the more polite and friendly they became."

While the American ships were wintering in Hongkong, Perry learned that French and Russian admirals at Shanghai were planning a visit to the Bay of Yedo. He resolved not to allow them to snatch away the advantages he had gained; and although navigation in those waters was supposed to be hazardous in winter he sailed for Japan on the 14th of January, 1854. With three steam frigates and four sloops of war he moved up the Bay of Yedo, passing Uraga, and on the 13th of February came to anchor twenty miles from the capital.

Shortly after Perry's first visit the Shogun, or emperor, had died. The Japanese officials had sent the Americans news of this while the squadron was at Hongkong and had requested that they defer their

return as it might create confusion. Perry suspected the genuineness of the report; at least, he could see no reason why he should not be near to comfort his new friends in their bereavement. On arrival he was well received; but the Japanese dignitaries who conferred with his captains — for Perry was still playing his rôle of exclusiveness — at once requested that the ships put back to Uraga, where, they said, preparations had been made to treat with the Americans and to give answer to the President's letter. Perry, feeling that it would be dangerous to yield in a single instance, replied through his captains that Uraga was unsafe and inconvenient for the ships, and, further, that it was the custom of civilized nations to treat at the metropolis. When the dignitaries continued to insist upon Uraga and the captains to refuse, several days having been spent in useless conference, Perry settled the difficulty in a characteristic way. Without warning he moved the squadron forward until within sight of Yedo. This induced the Japanese promptly to adopt a conciliatory tone; they then proposed for the treaty ground Yokohama, almost opposite where the ships were anchored, and this was at once accepted.

On the 8th of March, the day that had been set for beginning the negotiations, the commodore with five hundred men and three bands of music went ashore to the "Treaty House," erected especially for this occasion. At an early stage in the negotiations the Japanese expressed a willingness to enter into friendly intercourse with the United States, but seemed determined to grant nothing. Three weeks of conference followed; and as the commodore continued to show the firmness and dignity that had already won prestige for him, and as he kept his men strictly under discipline, the Japanese

came to regard their persistent visitors with increasing tolerance and interest.

In the middle of the negotiations Perry delivered to the Japanese the presents that the storeship had lately brought from America, designed especially for this people, and he sent ashore officers and workmen to prepare the gifts for exhibition. Among them were agricultural implements, clocks, two telegraph instruments, three Francis lifeboats, and a Lilliputian railway. The last had a locomotive, tender, car, and rails, but was so small that it could scarcely carry a child of six.

> The Japanese, however, were not to be cheated out of a ride, and, as they were unable to reduce themselves to the capacity of the inside of a carriage, they betook themselves to the roof. It was a spectacle not a little ludicrous to behold a dignified mandarin whirling around the circular road at the rate of twenty miles an hour, with his loose robes flying in the wind . . . [clinging] with a desperate hold to the edge of the roof, [and] grinning with intense interest.

In return the Japanese brought generous presents of lacquered work, pongee, umbrellas, dolls, and various other things, together with the substantial remembrances of two hundred sacks of rice and three hundred chickens. Then, after this evidence of friendliness, they entertained their guests with wrestling matches between their champions, enormously fat and muscular. Later the Americans received seventy of the Japanese on board the *Powhatan*; and the cook fairly outdid himself in setting forth a dinner which, as the Japanese did not pay much attention to order in eating the various dishes of food loading the tables, is described as the most "confused commingling of fish, flesh, and fowl, soups and syrups, fruits and fricassees, roast and boiled, pickles and preserves," all of which

the Japanese consumed in large quantities, and became fairly "uproarious under the influence of overflowing supplies of champagne, Madeira, and punch, which they seemed greatly to relish."

On Friday, 31 March, 1854, Commodore Perry and four Japanese commissioners signed a treaty written in the English, Dutch, and Chinese languages. This guaranteed succor and protection to shipwrecked Americans; permission for a ship in distress or overtaken by storm to enter any Japanese port; the opening of the ports Shimoda and Hakodate, where Americans could secure water, wood, coal, and provisions, and, with some restrictions, enjoy trade relations.

Larger privileges were granted later by the treaties of 1857 and 1858. England, quick to follow the advantage gained by the United States, six months after Perry's success also secured commercial rights; and Russia and Holland were only a few months later. Thus, if Perry's expedition had been planned solely for our own commercial profit, there might have been disappointment; but the prestige gained by the American commodore, who had shown himself such an able diplomat, and the honor that came to our nation in having drawn Japan from her isolation, proved an ample recompense.

The story of Perry and Japan is not complete without its sequel, which relates to the opening of Korea. Though the latter gained less public notice, it was a more difficult project. Like the successes of Kearny and Perry, it was the accomplishment of a naval officer, Robert W. Shufeldt.

Korea, the "hermit nation," had in the modern era been even more determined than her neighbors to keep

out Occidental influences. Thus, when Commander Shufeldt was sent with the *Wachusett* in 1867 to investigate the loss of the *General Sherman*, wrecked on her coast the preceding year, his letter to the king brought no reply, and he was ordered to depart.

Three years later the American minister to China, Mr. F. F. Low, with a naval escort under Rear Admiral John Rodgers, was sent to Korea on a mission closely parallel to that of Perry. With five ships they steamed to the mouth of the Salée River, thirty miles from Seoul. While making a survey of the river their boat was fired upon by a Korean fort; a fight followed in which two Americans were killed and more than forty Koreans killed or wounded. As the American demand for an apology from the Korean government brought no answer, after a sufficient interval Admiral Rodgers sent ashore a retaliatory expedition, captured and destroyed five forts, and inflicted losses of three hundred and fifty in killed and wounded upon the Koreans. Low now resumed his attempt to negotiate a treaty, but the local officials refused to transmit his letters to their government. The mission thus came to naught. The Navy Department, on receiving Rodgers's report, approved of what he had done, but cautioned him against undertaking the conquest of Korea.

Nothing further was attempted by our government until 1878, when Shufeldt, then a commodore, was sent to Korea. This time he held to his purpose until he succeeded, but the task required four years of determined effort and skillful diplomacy.

Since the difficulty previously experienced had been the inability to reach the king with communications, Shufeldt went to the Japanese state department and sought to gain their good services in transmitting his

letters. The Japanese represented that this might involve them in certain complications, and they would do no more than let one of their consuls at a distant seaport take the matter up with the Korean governor of the district. The latter, however, refused to forward the American documents.

At this point the famous Chinese statesman, Li Hung Chang, hearing of Shufeldt, invited him to Tientsin. Li at once offered his good offices in the Korean problem, and further told him of the need he felt of getting the advice of a competent naval officer in organizing the Chinese Navy. Russia was then threatening.

The time for the cruise having expired, Shufeldt had to take his ship home. Soon, however, Washington gave him permission to return on a secret mission; and he went back, supposedly as attaché to the legation. During his absence, however, the political atmosphere had changed; and he found Li Hung Chang lacking enthusiasm and disposed to give little or no help by acting as intermediary with Korea. A treaty between China and Russia had allayed the fear of aggression by the latter country.

There followed many months of patient work and waiting until Shufeldt began to despair of obtaining anything whatever from Li Hung Chang. The next year, however, disclosed to the American minister at Peking that the Chinese emperor was convinced of advantages that would result from Korea's establishing treaty relations with the Western powers and first with America.

The treaty was virtually drafted at Tientsin. A deadlock was threatened in negotiations when Li insisted on inserting a clause affirming the suzerainty of China over Korea and Shufeldt refused. Finally Li waived the point. Early next month the American

officer in the U.S.S. *Swatara*, preceded by three ships of the Chinese Navy, went to Korea to draw up the treaty. Strange to relate, the Japanese foreign minister from Seoul also appeared on the scene and seemed extremely desirous of offering his services.

On the 22d of May, 1882, Commodore Shufeldt, accompanied by fourteen officers and the marine guard of the *Swatara*, proceeded to the tent put up by the Korean authorities, and there, meeting two commissioners representing Korea (the president and a member of the royal cabinet), with Admiral Ting and Captain Clayson of the Imperial Chinese Navy, he and the two commissioners signed and sealed six copies of the treaty —three in English and three in Chinese.

This treaty was much more comprehensive than the initial treaties with either China or Japan. Other nations were watching; and in a few weeks Great Britain and Germany pressed forward and obtained treaties, followed shortly afterwards by Italy, Russia, France, and Austria, all accepting the American draft as their model.

Our former Secretary of State, John W. Foster, in his "American Diplomacy in the Orient," quotes a London journal which, in announcing the signing of the American-Korean treaty, recalled the feat accomplished thirty years before by Perry, who, "overcoming obstacles which had baffled almost every European nation, and without firing a shot or leaving ill-feeling behind, succeeded in opening Japan to foreign intercourse." The same paper then went on to say, "The conclusion of a treaty between the United States and Korea adds another to the peaceful successes of American diplomacy in the Far East." This, as Secretary Foster observed, was the work of the navy.

CHAPTER VI

MATTHEW FONTAINE MAURY (1806–1873)

EVERY naval vessel and merchant ship leaving American seaports for an extended cruise is equipped with pilot charts of the North Atlantic, the North Pacific, or other waters, published monthly by the Hydrographic Office of the Navy Department. These charts show currents, prevailing winds, the paths of storms that occurred during the corresponding period in previous years, and the best routes. At the head of each chart is inscribed, "Founded upon the researches made and the data collected by Lieut. M. F. Maury, U. S. Navy."

The story of Lieutenant Maury's career as a naval officer is entirely lacking in adventure, for he spent comparatively few years at sea and took part in no fighting. Yet his experience as a line officer was not without hints of power, and bore important results.

He received his commission as acting midshipman in 1825, when he was nineteen years old. The early frontier life of Tennessee furnished but poor preparation for even the small attainments in scholarship required of midshipmen at that time. His father, of stern Huguenot family, had strongly opposed his going into the navy and compelled his equally determined son to shift for himself in his plans for a career. Purchasing a horse on credit and accepting thirty dollars which was given to him by a sympathetic schoolmaster,

Maury set out for Virginia. This was the state of his birth; and he had relatives there, not far from Washington, his ultimate destination. A letter written years later records that when he reached his cousin Reuben at Charlottesville he had only fifty cents left, "which I was exceedingly afraid Reuben would find out." When he reached another kinsman, at Fredericksburg, the fifty cents had shrunk to twenty-five. Here he sold the horse for the same amount he had paid for her and remitted the sum to the original owner. When he finally reported at the Navy Department in Washington, he discovered that since he had traveled without orders he could not be sure of reimbursement.

Happily, however, the Secretary of the Navy saw his way clear to place no more difficulties in the young man's path and to grant him mileage, fifteen cents a mile. This solved all problems and raised Maury, as he then felt, to a state not only of comfort but even of affluence.

As he accustomed himself to the routine of ship life, he discovered there was opportunity to do considerable studying without neglecting regular duties. Spanish was required of all midshipmen, and he procured a Spanish work on navigation and went through it. He also took up trigonometry with equal ardor. His methods of study while pacing the deck on watch are unique. He writes:

> If I went below only for a moment or two, and could lay hands upon a dictionary or any book, I would note a sentence, or even a word, that I did not understand, and fix it in my memory to be reflected upon when I went on deck. I used to draw problems in spherical trigonometry with chalk on the shot, and put them in the racks where I could see them as I walked on deck.

MATTHEW FONTAINE MAURY

With such application there could be no question about Maury's being prepared when the time came for promotion. About this time he published a book on navigation which was noticed favorably by the highest nautical authorities in England, and later became the textbook of the American Navy. In connection with his examination he related in the *Southern Literary Messenger* (the magazine that Poe made famous) a midshipman's experience which we may be very sure was his own. When the Board of Examiners, made up of naval officers, questioned the midshipman as to the "lunar problem," he pretended ignorance of Bowditch, whose solution was for most midshipmen merely a matter of memory and, stepping to the board, treated the problem as one of spherical trigonometry. Such originality was beyond the board, who could not follow him. They retired to consider his case, and on their return advised him to go to sea and study his profession. This deferred his promotion for two years. It happened, incidentally, that all the midshipmen whom this lad had coached passed high on the list.

In 1839, when Maury had been in the navy fourteen years, there occurred an accident which at the time seemed to end all his prospects. Having obtained a few weeks' leave, he had gone to Tennessee to see his father, who was old and infirm. He wished to make arrangements for bringing his parents back to Virginia to make their home with him. While returning through Ohio, traveling on the top of a stagecoach because he had given his more comfortable seat inside to a poor woman who could not stand the cold night air, he was thrown to the ground, dislocating his kneecap and fracturing his thigh bone. A not overskillful surgeon in whose care he was placed set the bone so badly that

it had to be broken again and reset. Thus it was three months before he could resume his journey to New York, across the Allegheny Mountains by sleigh in the dead of winter. As far as his leg was concerned, he recovered his strength very slowly. It is no wonder that, in writing to his parents, he exclaimed, "A terrible calamity is this, indeed, to me." And yet, years afterwards, his friends saw in the calamity a blessing in disguise. The enforced quiet gave him opportunity for thinking and writing. His was a nature so active and eager that damming up its stream only made the strong current at once seek a new channel.

Within a few months the *Southern Literary Messenger* began to bring out a series of articles entitled "Scraps from the Lucky Bag," written under the name of "Harry Bluff, U. S. Navy." In these Maury discussed the navy in its various phases and did not hesitate to lay bare its weakness, both as to personnel and matériel, as well as to suggest means for improving its organization. The articles, which appeared at intervals for three years, attracted wide attention and were regarded as so able by his fellow officers that they had them reprinted and distributed at their own expense. Maury was a pioneer. The influence of wild Tennessee where he had lived his youth, then as much the frontier as Dakota was two generations later, may be seen in the freshness and vigor of his ideas. He thought for himself, and he hit on ideas so practical that there was no trouble in gaining recognition and support. For us of a later age the most interesting of the ideas he advanced at this time was an argument for the establishment of a naval school for midshipmen.

In his day the only provision made for the education of young midshipmen consisted of the "professors of

mathematics" and "teachers of languages" scattered about, some at navy yards, but the larger number on ships. They were by no means a carefully selected corps, and whatever ability they had was constantly thwarted by the exactions of duty. The schoolmaster assigned to a ship leaving on a three years' cruise had no real authority. There was no schoolroom; and rare was the time, even if he found mishipmen eager to learn, when interruptions were not frequent. Many captains and executives deliberately broke up any attempt at study.

As showing the need of reform Maury wrote in his contribution of December, 1840:

> The midshipman is practically taught to consider his attendance at school as the matter of the least importance in his routine of duties. He is interrupted at his lessons to go on shore for the captain's pig; or he is called from recitation to count the duck-frocks and trousers contained in the wardrobe of Tom Brown, the sailor. I have known a captain who forbade the midshipman to "work out longitude," on the ground that it was a secret of the captain and master; and, therefore, it was exceedingly officious and unbecoming the character of gentlemen for midshipmen to be prying into the rate and error of the chronometer, or to have anything to do with longitude.

What Maury proposed was a school ship on which midshipmen should be trained for two or three years in what might be regarded as the first principles of all subjects related to their profession (including a liberal admixture of science): mathematics, navigation, naval architecture (construction), gunnery, physics, astronomy, geodesy, tactics, and discipline. "Languages, too, though last yet not least," he remarked, "should be included in the system." The school ship should

"be kept regularly fitted for sea" and, manned by the midshipmen, should "take a cruise to sea of two or three months in the year, as well for exercise and relaxation as for the purpose of putting in practice what they had been taught while in port—firing at targets, and the like."

The interest in Maury's idea of a naval school was so widespread that it soon found expression in the recommendations included in the annual report of the Secretary of the Navy; and only five years later, 1845, a new Secretary, Bancroft, founded the important naval institution at Annapolis.

When it became known that Maury was the author of the articles in the *Southern Literary Messenger* his prestige was commonly acknowledged. His leg was to give him trouble for years to come and made it doubtful whether ever again he would be equal to arduous duty afloat. Soon, however, not upon his own application but on the recommendation of his fellow officers, he was placed in charge of the Depot of Charts and Instruments at Washington. This he developed into the National, or Naval, Observatory, including the Hydrographic Office. Here began his famous Wind and Current Charts.

Some eleven years before, while still a midshipman, he had been given the duties of master (navigator) on the sloop of war *Falmouth*, about to sail for Rio de Janeiro. In his earnest, thoroughgoing way he attempted to prepare for his duties by inquiring in New York as to the winds and currents that he should meet and the proper course to follow. No one could give him the desired information; and when he sought for it in books, he was equally disappointed. A voyage to South America was a leisurely, zigzagging affair. Be-

cause of legends which told of sweeping currents to the north of Cape San Roque (the northeastern extremity of Brazil) which would cast any vessel coming within their influence upon an iron-bound coast, early navigators had thought it prudent to go first to Europe in order that they might follow a route that was old and tried. From the Cape Verde Islands they would sail before the wind and cross the Atlantic a second time, toward Cape San Roque; and if their destination was not a Brazilian port but one in Australia or China, they would cross the broad Atlantic a third time in order to round the Cape of Good Hope. This zigzagging was to a large degree because of tradition; the parts of the South Atlantic outside of this route, although free from rocks, shoals, or other particular perils of navigation, were avoided simply because they were unknown.

In the National Observatory Maury stressed sailing on a great circle when it was practicable, so that one might follow the shortest course between two points connected by the circle. His first step as pathfinder of the seas was, as he said, "to make an exhibit of what had been obtained from the old sea-chests"; that is, bringing together the information he had gleaned from the one thousand or more old log books which he found stowed away in the Navy Department, he presented to mariners a set of Track Charts for the North Atlantic. These first charts he himself characterized as "meager and unsatisfactory"; but, bringing them to the notice of navigators, he called attention to the blank spaces on the charts and urged upon them the need of more and better observations. Each captain was promised that if he would coöperate in a general plan of observations at sea, at the end of a cruise sending regularly to the

National Observatory at Washington an abstract log of his voyage, he would be furnished in return without cost a copy of the charts and sailing directions founded upon the observations.

In a very little while more than a thousand navigators were jotting down their records, day and night, in all parts of the ocean. The minimum requirement to secure recognition as a coöperator called for the following: the latitude and longitude of the ship, the height of the barometer, the temperature of the air and of the water, all at least once a day; the direction and force of the wind three times a day; the variation of the compass occasionally; and the set of a current whenever encountered. This was asked of merchantmen; of men of war a much more elaborate abstract log was required. Furthermore, navigators were to cast overboard at stated periods bottles containing their record of latitude and longitude and date, and also were to pick up such bottles wherever found, noting the exact position and time, and forward them to Washington.

Old seamen were at first skeptical of the information proffered them, believing that knowledge gained by their own experience was worth more than what charts and books could offer. But a few tried them and soon discovered that those who relied on the charts made quicker voyages than those who ignored them. The most famous race course in the world at this time was the fifteen-thousand-mile stretch from New York to San Francisco. The finest clipper ships afloat were engaged in this service, and every ship that sailed was racing against time. One of the best-known contests occurred in 1852, when four clippers sailed within a few days of one another; and it is evidence of the confidence that had been established in Maury's "Sailing

Directions" that all four followed them with great care. Only one slight departure was made, when a captain on the outward voyage tried to gain on the charts by sailing two hundred miles to the west of the prescribed course and then, falling a victim to the old dread of currents sweeping ships upon San Roque, laid his course due east. Because of this he lost three days in the race. The best record made in this race was 92 days, 4 hours, from port to anchor. This was exceptionally good time. The average passage, when use was made of charts, was 135 days; previous to the use of charts it had been 183 days. The charts meant a great saving annually to shipowners; indeed, one of the conservative British financiers estimated it as mounting up to several million pounds sterling.

In 1844 Maury read a paper before the National Institute, "On the Gulf Stream and Currents of the Sea." Fourteen years later he remarked, "Up to that time but little was known of this river in the ocean." Since then great attention has been focused upon it. The Coast Survey carried on extensive investigations, and the whole world became interested in the chapters devoted to this subject by Maury in his "Physical Geography." He could never have accomplished the great work he did without the thousands afloat making observations under his direction and the many enthusiastic, skilled officers in Washington acting as his assistants. The latter coöperated in digesting the data sent to the National Observatory and in incorporating them in the various charts of every sea being prepared there.

Europe had been interested for some time; but the greatest move for coöperation came in 1853, when, in response to an invitation issued by the United States

to an international conference, ten great nations sent their representatives to Brussels "to agree upon a uniform mode of making nautical and meteorological observations." The countries participating in the conference were Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, and the United States. As the delegates proceeded to organize, they voted to make Maury, who represented the United States, president; but with characteristic modesty he declined the honor, proposing that it be given to the representative of Belgium. Maury was the guiding spirit of the conference, and he was extremely successful in solving every difficulty and preserving the greatest harmony in the deliberations, which occupied the months of August and September; also, as will be shown, he held the discussion to practical ideas.

Maury announced the offer of the Secretary of the Navy to furnish a set of Wind and Current Charts to every merchant captain, no matter what his nationality, who would assist in securing careful observations as recommended by the Brussels Conference. Maury by his influence went far beyond this: he stimulated research work in meteorology in all quarters of the world. Almost at once Russia, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and the Papal States each provided for giving the abstract logs kept on board their vessels, both commercial and naval, a full discussion with a plan of publishing the results later; and Prussia, Spain, Sardinia, the Free City of Hamburg, and the Republic of Bremen followed shortly afterwards.

One of the recommendations of the conference was that in case of war the abstract logs, no matter on what ships found, should be regarded as sacred and be forwarded to their proper destination.

It was the first League of Nations, and it is no wonder that Maury in his enthusiasm wrote:

> Rarely has there been such a sublime spectacle presented to the scientific world before: all nations agreeing to unite and coöperate in carrying out according to the same plan one system of philosophical research with regard to the sea. Though they may be enemies in all else, here they are friends. Every ship that navigates the high seas with these charts and blank abstract-logs on board may henceforth be regarded as a floating observatory — a temple of science.

Honors of the highest kind from countries and learned societies were now showered upon Maury. It is not too much to say that he was honored as no American had been before him and as very few, if any, have been since. The emperor of Russia sought to make him "Knight of the Order of St. Ann"; the king of Denmark, "Knight of the Dannebrog"; the king of Portugal, "Knight of the Tower and Sword"; the king of Belgium, "Knight of the Order of St. Leopold"; the emperor of France, "Commander of the Legion of Honor"; while Prussia, Austria, Sweden, Holland, Sardinia, and France struck gold medals in his honor. The orders of knighthood he declined as inconsistent with the character and duty of an American officer; no man, however, could have been insensible to such distinction. That he prized the medals also is shown by his mentioning them in his will so that on his death they might be distributed equally among his children.

It was at this time also or a little later that he was made a member of learned societies as far separated as the "Natuurkundige Vereeniging in Nederlandsch Indie" (Batavia), "Société des sciences, des arts et des lettres de Hainault" (Mons), "Académie impériale

des sciences de Russie" (St. Petersburg), as well as of several others almost as famous abroad, and of a large number in this country.

The impression Maury made abroad may, indeed, be compared with that made by Franklin three quarters of a century earlier. Europe realized that here was a man of genius who had conferred a lasting benefit upon the world.

Within five years after the conference it was estimated that nineteen countries, with a combined naval force and merchant marine of 124,150 vessels, were coöperating in this great work; those not coöperating were but four small maritime powers, with a total of 13,300 vessels. As Maury remarked, "Nations to which more than nineteen twentieths of the tonnage belongs have already joined hands."

Yet Maury was not content with this. He immediately added the following to the words just quoted:

> In reviewing our labors, our object is not to boast; it is to gather strength to do more and to do it better.... We are investigating the laws of the atmosphere. It covers the land as well as the sea. It is a whole, and for its influences to be rightly understood, it must be treated as a whole.... Agricultural and sanitary meteorology is as important as nautical. Farmers and invalids are quite as much interested in the development of meteorological facts and laws on the land as merchants and sailors are on the sea. The farmers and the *savants* of the shore are therefore appealed to, to come up, join forces, and do for the land what seamen and shipping merchants have done for the sea.

This was addressed particularly to his own countrymen, and he repeatedly urged this most important extension of meteorological observations and reports to the end of his life, nearly twenty years later. If he

had been listened to and followed, our nation would have speedily organized the Weather Bureau, which was not established for many years.

Another great service of Maury's, in which he did the pioneer work, had to do with the laying of the Atlantic cable. As early as 1848 he had come to the conclusion, in the course of his investigations of the winds and currents, that there existed between Newfoundland and Ireland a broad and level plateau at a comparatively moderate depth. From that time on, in his direction of the National Observatory, he kept such ships as were available employed in making deep-sea soundings. In February, 1854, he summarized the results in a report to the Secretary of the Navy:

> From Newfoundland to Ireland the distance between the nearest points is about 1600 miles, and the bottom of the sea between the two places is a plateau which seems to have been placed there especially for the purpose of holding the wires of the submarine telegraph, and of keeping them out of harm's way. It is neither too deep nor too shallow; yet it is so deep that the wires but once landed will remain forever beyond the reach of the anchors of vessels, icebergs, and drifts of any kind, and so shallow that they may be readily lodged upon the bottom.

From the fact that soundings which brought up specimens from the bottom revealed that there was here no ooze, sand, or gravel, Maury further advanced as the plain inference: "These depths of the sea are not disturbed either by waves or currents. Consequently, a telegraphic wire once laid there would remain as completely beyond the reach of accident as it would be if buried in air-tight cases."

To Cyrus W. Field, whose name will forever be associated with the Atlantic cable, Maury wrote many

letters. Field went ahead and accomplished the great work. At a dinner given in New York in 1858 to celebrate the arrival of the first message across the Atlantic, Field is reported to have said, "I am a man of few words: Maury furnished the brains, England gave the money, and I did the work."

The story of the remaining years of Maury's life is for the most part painful and can be briefly told. The Civil War came and was for him a tragic experience. It blasted his career and obscured his fame with a suddenness such as has rarely come even with death.

Maury had no liking for slavery. In a letter written to a favorite cousin in 1851 he suggested the joy that would be his if the people of Virginia would rise up and say: "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in Virginia. . . . It would relieve our own loved Virginia of that curse." When the war clouds were hovering low, he was not blind to what was about to follow nor lacking in efforts toward averting the break. Pathetic in the extreme are the letters he wrote at this time to the governor of Pennsylvania and others, appealing to one of the Northern states to "step forth as mediator between the sections." When all had failed, Maury, like Lee, thought that his duty was to Virginia, and he resigned his commission. This step was in no sense prompted by ambition, for no rank or assignment had been offered him in the Confederate service. In fact both the Southern president and the secretary of the navy had shown several times in their previous relations with him, when they held office under the government, that they were somewhat hostile. Moreover, in the field of research, where his interest especially lay, he had everything to lose and nothing to gain.

Maury's first detail in the Confederacy was as "Chief of the Seacoast, Harbor, and River Defenses of the South." In this his principal service consisted in inventing a torpedo and in mining the James River and other waters. Copper wire, rubber, and other necessary materials were extremely hard to procure. Nevertheless Maury got his work under way and would undoubtedly have furnished a terrible menace to the Union naval forces if the Confederate government had not suddenly interrupted his work and, without consulting him, ordered him to Europe as the purchasing agent of torpedo material. Maury was probably the leading expert of the world in torpedo warfare, and the transfer to a duty which could easily have been intrusted to a junior officer can be attributed only to an old-time hostility. The move was assuredly providential from the standpoint of the Union cause. Because of torpedoes the North lost a ship in the James River, one at Charleston, and one in Mobile Bay; further, through dread of mines ships were kept out of certain waters; but this was nothing in comparison with what would have happened if Maury had been there to supervise the preparing and planting of mines.

Maury's stay in England during the last three years of the war was a sad exile. His health was poor, and he was sick at heart. At the close of the war he proposed going back and yielding himself up as a prisoner of war. But friends, both in the North and South, urged against this course. There continued in the North an especial bitterness against him; and even Charles Francis Adams, the United States minister to England, remarked, "All his friends should advise him against going back to the United States yet." While waiting for the amnesty proclamation he went to Mexico and

then returned to England. In Paris and in London he was employed by various of the leading governments of Europe to give courses instructing their officers in defensive sea-mining and the electric torpedo.

It was at this time that the venerable University of Cambridge conferred upon Maury, Tennyson, and Max Müller, all on the same occasion, the degree of LL.D. It is hard to conceive a finer characterization of him than that given when he was presented for this distinguished honor:

I present to you Matthew Fontaine Maury, who while serving in the American Navy did not permit the clear edge of his mind to be dulled, or his ardor for study to be dissipated, by the variety of his professional labors, or by his continual change of place, but who, by the attentive observation of the course of the winds, the climate, the currents of the seas and oceans, acquired those materials for knowledge, which afterwards in leisure, while he presided over the Observatory at Washington, he systematized in charts and in a book—charts which are now in the hands of all seamen, and a book which has carried the fame of its author into the most distant countries of the earth. Nor is he merely a high authority in nautical science. He is also a pattern of noble manners and good morals, because in the guidance of his own life he has always shown himself a brave and good man. When that cruel civil war in America was imminent, this man did not hesitate to leave home and friends, a place of high honor and an office singularly adapted to his genius—to throw away, in one word, all the goods and gifts of fortune—that he might defend and sustain the cause which seemed to him the just one. "The victorious cause pleased the gods," and now perhaps, as victorious causes will do, it pleases the majority of men, and yet no one can withhold his admiration from the man who, though numbered among the vanquished, held his faith pure and unblemished at the price of poverty and exile.

About the same time Napoleon III offered to Maury the office of director of the French Imperial Observatory; but a general amnesty having been proclaimed in America, he preferred to return to his own country. At once the University of the South at Sewanee wanted him to become the head of that institution, but he declined in order to accept the chair of Meteorology at the Virginia Military Institute. We should be interested to know what determined the scientist who had known world honors to accept what many regarded as a very humble position. It is safe to say that no small consideration was the opportunity of again living in his beloved Virginia and of being in close proximity to his old friend General Robert E. Lee, who had lately accepted the rectorship of Washington (Washington and Lee) University, the grounds of which are contiguous to those of the Virginia Military Institute in the small town of Lexington. Here he spent the closing five years of his life.

A strange life was Maury's; and it is only in our day that the country is revising the severe judgment passed upon him because he left the flag and joined fortunes with the Confederacy. If his judgment was at fault, it should not blind us to his attainments and his great service to the navy.

"A dull life, but a fairly easy living," was the rather common idea of what the navy offered when Maury entered the service. To him it was neither. He did not appear at a time when opportunities for winning fame were thrust upon midshipmen, but his spirit was so eager and active that he was not content merely with doing the duty assigned and doing it well; he was constantly turning over in his mind possible improvements in the navy and in nautical science. In an

address at the University of Virginia he referred to this habit as a rule of life to which he attributed a large degree of success: "Never to let the mind be idle for want of useful occupation, but always to have in reserve subjects of thought or study for the leisure moments and the quiet hours of the night."

Maury thought in his leisure moments, and he outlined the system of naval education which, in its main essentials, is still followed at our Naval Academy. He thought again, and he devised his Wind and Current Charts showing the shortest and safest routes, in the preparation of which he got the world to coöperate. He thought further, on all kinds of subjects, such as the Atlantic cable, Weather Bureau reports for farmers, trans-American railways, and the Panama Canal. His judgment was nearly always good; and his mental processes were so clear and logical that he enlisted the coöperation of multitudes, either to supply material for what he was constructing or themselves to build on what he suggested. Happily, too, Maury in his thinking did not make the mistake, so common to those who ponder long on deep and abstruse matters, of overemphasizing material research at the expense of spiritual power. Nature was to him an absorbing study because he saw in it the working out of God's law and purpose.

Though painfully reminded many times early in his career that he had not had the advantages of college training or even a fair common-school education, Maury stands in the front rank of American scientists. He never could have accomplished the great work he did but for the navy, of which he was a part; it was in the performance of duty in the navy that he hit upon his great mission as pathfinder of the seas, and it was by means of the support and coöperation primarily

of the American Navy that he accomplished the accurate and far-reaching results. He had organized for scientific research scarcely less than the entire navy.

Maury was an idealist. He thought long and carefully before he decided on what were "rules," but when he had accepted them he held to them very tenaciously. There was a certain "rule of conduct" of his own framing which repeatedly appeared in the introduction of the successive editions of his "Sailing Directions to accompany the Wind and Current Charts"; it admirably expresses the ideal of true science:

> To keep the mind unbiased by theories and speculations; never to have any wish that an investigation would result in favor of this view, in preference to that, and never to attempt by premature speculation to anticipate the results of investigation, but always to trust to the observations.

CHAPTER VII

JOHN ADOLPHUS DAHLGREN (1809–1870)

"THE GUNNER, that honest and godly man, learned in arithmetic and astronomy, was master of a terrible craft—his saltpeter gathered, it was said, from within vaults, tombs, and other desolate places; his touchwood made from old toadstools dried over a smoky fire; himself working unscathed only by grace of Santa Barbara, the protectress of all artillerymen."

This, the mystery attached to ordnance in the Middle Ages, persisted in large part well down into the nineteenth century, and because this branch was seemingly occult most officers of the navy left it severely alone. Indeed, for three decades following the War of 1812, no real advance took place either in the United States or in Europe. To rouse our Service from this lethargy required an officer of genius and unusual force. Such a one Dahlgren proved to be.

His ordnance system was founded upon two principles which he formulated: (1) "Speed is an essential requisite for a first-class ship of war, but essential only to go into action, not out of it"; (2) "The greatest strength will be found in the simplicity and concentration of guns of one caliber, if this caliber is the largest which it is practical for ships to carry." These principles resulted eventually in the displacement of wooden vessels by ironclads. In the days when fleets fought according to the tactics of the eighteenth century, with guns that had changed very little almost up to the

JOHN ADOLPHUS DAHLGREN

From a photograph taken on the U.S.S. *Pawnee*, off Charleston

time of the Civil War, ships of the line and frigates often pounded away for hours or days, gaining no decision and inflicting very little damage. When Dahlgren produced guns which were much heavier and more accurate, and substituted for solid shot shells which tore out the very vitals of the enemy wooden ship, it was plain that a better defense must be afforded, and armor was a logical development.

Dahlgren, born in Philadelphia, came of good old Norse stock. Both his grandfather and father were graduates of Upsala University, Sweden, and their character and standing were quite equal to their education. His father, adventurous by nature, at the age of twenty got into trouble because he assisted in the distribution of some republican literature—a heinous offense in the eyes of monarchy. In consequence he was obliged to flee, and his property was confiscated by the crown; but political offenses are often such as carry with them little or no blame. It was not long before he had won recognition in Philadelphia (where he made his new home) as a merchant of ability and signal integrity. Soon he was appointed Swedish consul there, a position which he held until his death. Nor was the future admiral less fortunate in his mother, Martha Rowan of Philadelphia. She was descended from one of the earliest settlers of Pennsylvania, and her father had fought in the battles of Germantown and Princeton.

Dahlgren early conceived a longing for the sea. The sight of deeply laden ships to be seen from his father's doorstep, a glimpse of the navy yard, which he visited on a holiday ramble to gaze at the dreaded three-decker *Pennsylvania*, and the reading of Cooper's sea tales, particularly "The Pilot," decided the lad at the

age of fifteen to apply for a midshipman's warrant—only to be promptly refused. His father had died the year before, leaving the family in straitened circumstances. As he was the eldest child he had to depend on himself, but he showed no faltering in his pursuit of a career. He induced schoolmasters, a judge, a doctor, his representative in Congress, and other friends of standing to write to the Secretary of the Navy, and while this well-organized campaign was in progress he gained a first-hand knowledge of the sea by shipping before the mast on the brig *Mary Becket*, bound for Trinidad de Cuba. Before his return the Secretary had signed his warrant as midshipman.

His first cruise, which was on the frigate *Macedonian*, began the same year (1826). The long voyage, though occurring in a period that presents a blank page in naval history, was not without excitement for the eager boy. He witnessed a fight off the east coast of South America between Brazilian and Argentine vessels, met with slave ships from Africa, and chased a buccaneer.

Duty valuable as preparation for his later work came to Dahlgren in the years 1834–1837 in the Coast Survey. Before its conclusion he was suffering acutely from eyestrain because of close application; and the trouble was so serious that for five years it interrupted his active naval career, at one time threatening to terminate in blindness. Treatment in Paris under a renowned specialist brought no immediate relief; but courage, building on a strong constitution and aided by thorough rest and by falling in love with a noble woman whom he made his wife, in time repaired all damages.

The duty that followed also should be regarded as important in the period of preparation; he was ordered

to the *Cumberland,* cruising for three years in the Mediterranean. Four Paixhans (shell guns) were assigned as his division, and it was then that his bent for ordnance first came to notice. There existed a strong prejudice against shells, a type of projectile new to both officers and men, but Dahlgren at once realized their great superiority. To overcome the distrust felt by the crews he laid the guns himself, and his analytical mind recognized the difficulties which must be overcome. After each discharge the crews on the gun deck, being enveloped in smoke, did not know how to give the right elevation to their pieces. Dahlgren at once originated a plan for point-blank fire, laying the dispart by the horizon. The motion of the ship made necessary some such means for correcting the level. The beauty of the scheme was its simplicity, for it was not beyond the comprehension of the ordinary sailor; yet this was the forerunner of the directorscope of World War days. Dahlgren was indefatigable in drilling his division, and results were not lacking. He writes:

> The second (my own) did the best firing; their volley was like one crack. I always tell them that I must have them the best in the ship, and one would smile to see how they go ahead when I say, "Come, Second Division, we must not be last."

A few months later an entry in his journal shows that he had made a beginning in what was to prove an imposing array of inventions relating to ordnance:

> I am much occupied with having made a model of a spring percussion lock, which is to overcome the insuperable difficulty that has hitherto prevented its use. The exploding powder escaping by the vent has always destroyed the lock hitherto.

It was in 1847, when Dahlgren was between thirty-seven and thirty-eight years of age, that his distinctive service began. In January he was ordered to the Washington Navy Yard and given the especial assignment of making Hale's rockets. He writes, "At this time there was no ordnance establishment; the fuze stocks and cannon locks and shells were made and fitted in the plumbers' shop." Small presses located in a little frame house furnished the apparatus required for this work. At once Dahlgren became interested in devising improved presses and other machinery. Within a few weeks the scope of his duties was extended. He had not been there three months before he had put before the Bureau of Ordnance a plan for an ordnance workshop at the Navy Yard to which the bureau gave its approval. This was the beginning of the famous gun factory that was to supply the naval ordnance of the Civil War and the World War. A month later one of the bureau told him that there was a prospect of giving some permanency to his present assignment. The new 32-pounder system was being introduced at this time, and to Dahlgren was set the task of fitting to the guns tangent sights, which had just made their appearance. This was done by actual firing and plotting the fall of shot, using Coast Survey methods.

In October of this year the position of head of the Department of Gunnery at the new Naval School (Academy) was offered him; but his enthusiasm for the work lately begun, in which he saw large possibilities, compelled him to decline. Later, at the urging of the Secretary of the Navy, he gave his assistance by going to Annapolis twice a week and instructing midshipmen—this in addition to his regular duty.

Realizing the need of guns suitable for ships' boats, Dahlgren two years later designed and built the boat howitzers and their carriages. The idea at first encountered great objection from the Service, but these guns were the 12-pounders and 24-pounders that were destined to prove so serviceable on the rivers and in cutting out and landing expeditions during the Civil War. They also were used in the tops of Farragut's squadron when running the batteries on the Mississippi.

Next he gave himself to the construction of what was to revolutionize the armament of the ships of war and increase their effectiveness tremendously by introducing all big guns. In 1850, though still only a lieutenant, he submitted to the Chief of Ordnance plans for a 9-inch shell gun weighing 9000 pounds, made on strictly new lines. In the same month he designed also a 50-pounder of 8000 pounds. These guns, which were experimental, were made at the West Point iron foundry, near Richmond. They were of iron, cast solid, and smoothbore. Their distinctive feature was their huge size and curve of pressure. They were the first to exhibit in their form the fact that greater strength was required at the breech than along the chase and at the muzzle, their unusual shape gaining for them the sobriquet "soda bottles." They embody the first recognition that guns must be designed scientifically so as to stand the varying pressures in the bore.

There had been much professional criticism of the models, many officers taking the view that the guns would present an excessive weight and prove unmanageable; but weight is of no concern if proper means are applied for handling it. Both guns gave satisfactory tests; indeed, it was the larger, the 9-inch, that Dahlgren much preferred when it came to practical use.

Nor did he stop here in urging large ordnance. While the government still leaned to the idea of light steamers withdrawn from commerce as a valuable asset in time of war, he advocated screw frigates armed with 9-inch shell guns throughout on the gun deck and 10-inch pivot guns on the spar deck, but, as he remarked, "Public opinion is evidently not for shell guns solely, nor for heavy cannon." Many years were to elapse before he was to see ships armed as he advised. Nevertheless he went ahead in his experimenting, and instead of compromising with those who wished little or no change he next constructed an 11-inch gun and then a 15-inch; he made designs even for a 20-inch—this, however, was never fabricated. It did not in the least trouble him that the old sailing ships of the navy were not planned to carry such guns. As he enthusiastically wrote to Lieutenant Matthew Fontaine Maury in December, 1850:

> The only 9-inch gun in the United States is that which has been cast after my proposition and draught. . . . I never would patch up an old idea to carry out a new principle. Let us have new ships for heavy ordnance and steam, and the old frigates will make excellent coal ships. A merry Christmas to you and yours, and I hope another year will enable us to say to the new navy—"A merry Christmas."

There was too much inertia in the navy and too great indifference on the part of Congress and the nation to witness more than the beginning of the suggested change in a twelvemonth, but Farragut, Foote, Rowan, and Drayton, master minds of the navy, all encouraged Dahlgren to the utmost.

His life in these years was full indeed, for in addition to an enormous mass of routine work there were con-

stant interviews with the Department and with committees of Congress. On 15 May, 1854, "the cradle of ordnance," as Dahlgren had termed the old building assigned to ordnance at the yard, was superseded by a structure erected for the purpose and fitted with appropriate machinery. The ordnance plant in 1856 comprised a gun foundry, machine shops, carriage and mount shops, besides facilities for the fabrication of all types of accessories and spare parts, and an experimental battery.

In 1855, when the superiority of Dahlgren's guns was beginning to be known not only throughout our own Service but also abroad, he was promoted from lieutenant to commander. He was now forty-six years of age; and a large family then, as now, presented to an officer in the Service problems in addition to those more directly related to his profession.

Dahlgren early had realized the great economy that could be effected by arming a few strong frigates built to carry the heavy guns he had designed. By a convincing analysis he showed that their broadside would each be only one hundred and fifty-four pounds less than that of the largest three-decker afloat, and he urged what has been recognized since: the great increase in offensive power that comes from concentration such as could be afforded only by ordnance of large caliber.

When Congress finally authorized six frigates, he labored with great persistence that at least one might be fully armed according to his plans. On winning the assent of the Secretary and submitting designs for the *Niagara*, the complete realization of his plans was frustrated by the opposition of Mr. Steers, the constructor; the latter objected to an armament of all

big guns for fear it would injure the vessel's speed. As a result her armament represented a compromise, Dahlgren's plans being accepted for the gun deck, and Steers's plans for the spar deck.

The *Merrimac*, commissioned in 1856, was the first vessel equipped with 9-inch Dahlgrens. The gun trials were thoroughly successful; the large pieces were not unmanageable and proved to have greater range and accuracy than those previously used. Further, as experimental tests had shown, the curve of pressure greatly increased the life of the guns. Whereas the best of the earlier heavy guns, the "Columbiads," had rarely exceeded 800 rounds, the Dahlgrens lasted seldom less than 1800 rounds and in several instances exceeded 4000. The tests were convincing.

In this same year Dahlgren published a work on "Shells and Shell Guns," which attracted wide attention abroad as well as at home. The London *Morning Post* wrote:

> To no one—not even to Paixhans himself, it may be—is the naval shell system more indebted than to the author whose able and interesting work now lies before us. Paixhans, indeed, had the intelligence to perceive the application of shells fired from long guns, and employed in naval warfare, but Dahlgren was the first to carry it out as an exclusive system of naval armament.... This great revolution of naval armament is chiefly attributable to the authority of Commander Dahlgren.

To his great satisfaction he was now informed that he would command the *Plymouth*, which he might arm as he wished and use to test his ordnance projects. In due time she was fitted out at the Washington Navy Yard with one 11-inch and four 9-inch Dahlgrens, besides three howitzers. In addition, Dahlgren added

one hundred rifled muskets, an arm of his own invention, the first rifled shoulder pieces in our country.

When the *Plymouth* had put to sea, practice with the 9-inch and 11-inch guns began and continued day after day. The efforts used to make the gunnery seem like a game and to arouse emulation resembled those of recent days; there was rivalry between the different crews and premiums were given to the three individuals most skillful in the general handling of the guns and to the three best shots.

In a cruise of six months, from June to December, 1857, Dahlgren visited the Azores, Lisbon, the Texel, and Southampton. Encountering heavy weather he found opportunity to demonstrate that the large guns could be fired in spite of unfavorable conditions. Some 121 shells were discharged without great difficulty from the 11-inch pivot gun.

From May until December, 1858, Dahlgren cruised along the Mexican coast in the interests of American citizens, mainly at Tampico and Vera Cruz. He showed himself a master of international law and found occasion to urge many things upon the Mexican government. Our consul at Tampico wrote: "You have done more for the commerce of this place than all the ships and squadrons belonging to the United States have done since I have had charge of this consulate."

In 1859 Dahlgren resumed work at the Washington Navy Yard on rifled ordnance, the $10\frac{1}{2}$-pounders being the first guns finished. Abroad the Armstrong rifled gun was now coming into use. Except for an unsympathetic Chief of Ordnance, Dahlgren would have developed and manufactured, before the Civil War, rifled ordnance capable of piercing any armor. When the war came it interrupted all progress in this direction.

As nearly as the mistakes in her construction permitted, the *Niagara* was now armed with the battery Dahlgren had desired. She was one of six steam frigates built for the navy, the others being the *Merrimac*, the *Colorado*, the *Wabash*, the *Minnesota*, and the *Roanoke*. They were 375 feet long, 53 feet beam, and of 5200 tons' displacement. Their batteries were of 11-inch Dahlgrens.

For some years recognition had been coming from far and near. Commander A. H. Foote of the navy, writing of the attack on the Barrier Forts, near Canton, China, 1857, says of Dahlgren's howitzers: "These pieces of our squadron have gained everlasting fame. The English and French say they are the best pieces that they have ever seen." The commanding officer of the *Merrimac*, on her first visit to England, wrote:

> Your guns were particularly admired, the naval and military men admitting that they were constructed upon proper principles. . . . Repeated applications were made for their dimensions, which, as a matter of course, we declined to give.

Dahlgren's "Boat Armament" was now adopted in the Prussian service. A most comforting form of recognition at home was that afforded by Congress in 1860, when, though no additional rank was conferred, he was granted the pay of the next higher grade.

A resolve consistently adhered to which exhibited Dahlgren's enthusiasm for his work and also his fine sense of obligation to the nation, was that he never sought any pecuniary advantage through patents and royalties for his inventions in ordnance; and when Rodman and Parrott used his basic idea in their improvements in ordnance he took action to prevent the navy from paying them undeserved royalties.

Dahlgren's service in the Civil War will be dealt with rather briefly, though not because it was not of the first quality. At the outbreak of hostilities he unexpectedly received command of the Washington Navy Yard for the reason that all senior to him at this station, headed by Franklin Buchanan, had abandoned their duties and joined the Confederacy. As commandant of the yard it was his responsibility to patrol the Potomac and guard the capital, a work which often threatened to go quite beyond the means at his disposal.

In July, 1862, he was made Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, a post which had been offered him a year before and which he had then declined, and seven months later he was promoted to the grade of rear admiral. About the same time he received the thanks of Congress for distinguished service in the line of his profession, improvements in ordnance, and exceptionally zealous and efficient work.

The affairs of the navy had now reached the point when the cry of "on to Charleston" was comparable in its public intensity to that of "on to Richmond." Two unsuccessful attempts in force by the blockading squadron under Rear Admiral Du Pont had resulted only in the press's assuming an unreasonable tone. Thus, when Dahlgren took command in July, 1863, hoisting his two-starred blue flag on the *Wabash*, he realized that he was confronting a difficult and embarrassing situation. He must quiet, if possible, the public clamor, yet avoid the useless sacrifice of men and ships.

Dahlgren's reputation with officers of the navy was that of a scientist rather than that of a sailor and fighter. They thought a gunnery man placed in high command at sea would not prove an efficient leader;

but Dahlgren soon convinced all those about him that he was as good a fighter as he was a thinker, and he won their esteem and affection by his ability and personal bravery. He never required one to take a risk greater than he himself accepted. A characteristic action that was merely the beginning of his service for the next two years, showing the man of action, occurred on the fourth day after his assuming command, when he led a bombardment of Fort Wagner, during which the monitor *Kaatskill,* flying his flag, was hit sixty times by heavy shell.

Minor engagements followed at frequent intervals. The blockade was more strictly enforced. Sumter was hammered to a mass of ruins; and twice, at the request of the Department, Dahlgren held a council of the captains of his ironclads to consider the advisability of entering Charleston. Courage was shown as much in resisting public opinion and not undertaking a foolhardy enterprise as it was in some of the great personal risks which he assumed.

In the early winter of 1864–1865, Sherman, advancing from the west, invested Savannah, and Dahlgren, with his formidable fleet not reduced by useless sacrifices, coöperating with him, compelled the evacuation of both Savannah and Charleston.

There were critics who loudly expressed their disappointment that the fleet had not taken Charleston. The more sane view was expressed by Sherman in a letter to Dahlgren:

> I now thank you in person for not having made the hazardous experiment, for when the time did come to act seriously, your fleet was perfect, well manned, and admirably suited to aid me in the execution of the plan which did accomplish the fall of Charleston, and more too.

Nor should this brief mention of Dahlgren's services in the Civil War be concluded without reference to what Dahlgren guns accomplished in the many other operations: they bombarded the Confederate forts at Hatteras Inlet; they won the victory at Port Royal; two 11-inch Dahlgrens on the *Monitor* checked the *Merrimac* in the beginning of her triumph and sent her back to Norfolk, her career ended; the 11-inch and 15-inch Dahlgrens on the monitors at Mobile Bay, with those on the wooden ships, captured the Confederate ram *Tennessee* and enabled Farragut to take the approaches to Mobile Bay, just as they had won New Orleans for him. Passing over the other naval engagements of the war (in practically every one of which the Dahlgren guns were the main dependence in the Union ships), we come to the *Kearsarge-Alabama* duel. As the account of the battle appeared in London, the author, Frederick Milnes Edge, characterized it as "the first test of the merits of modern naval artillery." After giving the armament of each ship and discussing the firing he concluded: "The struggle was really decided by the two 11-inch Dahlgren smoothbores of the *Kearsarge* against the 7-inch Blakely rifle and the heavy 68-pound pivot of the *Alabama*." He further described it as "a contest for superiority between the ordnance of Europe and America," in which the latter showed a marked superiority.

Thus it was after the long, hard test of the Civil War that the Dahlgren cast-iron smoothbore 9-inch and 11-inch guns were still the favorite ordnance. The rifled gun was not yet a success, nor had experience with breech-loading rifles been satisfactory. Indeed, some years after the war the British Navy, after making a thorough trial of this type at sea, reverted to muzzle

loaders; not until 1875 did they return to the breech-loading system.

After two years spent as commander of the South Pacific Squadron, Dahlgren in 1868 returned to Washington as Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, but he never forgot his first love; and within a year, wishing for the more intimate personal touch with ordnance design and fabrication, he left the bureau for the Washington Navy Yard and Gun Factory, and here, eleven months later, death came to interrupt this tireless worker.

Dahlgren is the father of modern ordnance and gunnery. He found the navy asleep in all but seamanship; he aroused it, none too soon, and entirely changed guns and gunnery, as well as the construction of ships. He was a scientist and inventor as well as a seagoing officer of the first quality. He it was who contributed the first big guns and the first real sights, introduced the rifling of cannon and the construction of ironclads, and took the initial step toward the all-big-gun armored warship; and he it was who organized the great Naval Gun Factory at the Washington Navy Yard that continues of first importance even today—a vital element in the navy and just as significant in the recent World War as it was in the Civil War and the Spanish-American War.

The old-time Dahlgrens, which to our grandfathers seemed ponderous and awe-inspiring, have long since become but idle ornaments in the approaches of navy yards. Indeed, so rapid has been the advance in ordnance that the guns of a full generation later, such as dealt destruction to the cruisers of Spain, have in their turn become obsolete; but this is merely evidence that the Service has caught the spirit and followed in the steps of this progressive officer who strove all his life to perfect the great naval guns and the missiles which they

fired. His career is not a romantic story. He achieved success, not by popular acclaim or dramatic surprises but by careful thinking and hard, persistent application. In his last hours his mind reverted to the naval profession and he said, "The officer should wear his uniform, as the judge his ermine, without a stain." This observation could be applied to few more fittingly than to Dahlgren himself. Two noble monuments bear his name: Dahlgren Hall, the ordnance and gunnery building at the United States Naval Academy, and Dahlgren, Virginia, our great naval proving-ground on the Potomac.

CHAPTER VIII

DAVID GLASGOW FARRAGUT (1801–1870)

IF THE traditions of the Service which we are considering are real and vital, their influence is felt in two ways. The first is unconscious: they create an atmosphere, a spirit, of whose existence the ordinary officer or seaman is scarcely aware, but which, diffused like the air he breathes, is a constantly purifying current of honor, loyalty, and efficiency. The second, much more definite, is less general; it is most likely to come in the experience of the earnest, aspiring leader. When he is wrestling with problems there comes to guide him the memory of what some naval officer whom he especially reverences did in his perplexity. The principles involved are the same, and thus the success of the older nerves the younger to fight on and to win. In the Royal Navy it is Nelson to whom the officers constantly hark back. In the United States Navy it is Farragut who has this electrifying influence. As will be told later, Dewey said that the thought "What would Farragut do?" led him on to victory in Manila Bay. And we can affirm without fear of exaggeration that the simple, unvarnished tale of Farragut's taking the fleet through to victory at New Orleans and Mobile Bay has induced thousands of American boys to join the navy. In the masterly handling of his fleet Farragut does not suffer by comparison with the great Nelson; and whereas in private life the British admiral

DAVID GLASGOW FARRAGUT

was guilty of one terrible mistake, in which he blindly persisted, Farragut proves on scrutiny as pure and nobly true as the knights of old. Like many another American of distinction he appeals to the nation because of his democratic character. He was a native of that part of the country in which Lincoln eight years later had his birth; his earliest surroundings were almost equally humble; he had scarcely more schooling; and as he achieved highest honors he maintained a like simplicity.

His father, George Farragut, was a Spaniard, born in Minorca. Stirred by a spirit of adventure he came to America in 1776 and fought gallantly for the land of his adoption in the Revolution and in the War of 1812. His mother was Elizabeth Shine, born in North Carolina, of a good old Scotch family, being the daughter of Ellenor McIven. Shortly after his mother's death, when he was about eight years old, he was adopted by Commodore David Porter. On being taken with the Porters to Washington and then to Chester, Pennsylvania, he received at each place a few months of schooling. When he was nine years and five months old he was given a midshipman's warrant, and when he was ten he had his first cruise. Porter had just obtained command of the frigate *Essex*, and took his young ward with him in order that he might have a full experience of the stirring events which soon followed hard upon one another.

Less than a year later war with Great Britain was declared. Porter at once put to sea; and the tiny midshipman was destined to see an unusual amount of history during the next three years in the almost continuous cruising of the *Essex*. No other ship during this period voyaged so extensively.

One of their five prizes was the twenty-gun sloop of war *Alert*. A few days after this capture an incident occurred that revealed the spirit of the commanding officer's protégé. Here is the way Farragut saved the *Essex* from capture as he himself related it:

> While the ship was crowded with prisoners they planned a mutiny. The coxswain of the captain's gig of the *Alert*, who was a leader in the affair, came to my hammock with a pistol in his hand, and stood by it, gazing intently upon me. Seeing a man thus armed, and recognizing him as a prisoner, I knew there must be something wrong, and, probably from fear more than anything else, I remained perfectly motionless until he passed. Then, slipping from my hammock, I crept noiselessly to the cabin and informed Captain Porter of what I had seen. He sprang from his cot, was on the berth deck in an instant, and immediately cried "Fire! Fire!" The effect was wonderful. Instead of attempting to strike the fatal blow, the prisoners, or mutineers, became alarmed and confused, nor did they recover from their stupor until they heard the boarders called to the main hatch by the captain, whom they now saw for the first time in their midst, to secure them.

In the latter part of this year the *Essex* set out on a commerce-destroying cruise that was to extend over seventeen months, the longest and most successful of the war. Porter, always daring and full of initiative, having failed at the outset to meet other ships with whom he was to coöperate, decided to sail to the extreme south, around the Horn and into the Pacific. As the *Essex* was the first American frigate ever to round the Horn, Porter had little trouble in surprising the British whalers and merchantmen operating on the west coast of South America, especially in the vicinity of the Galapagos Islands. In his report of the cruise

to the Secretary of the Navy he says, "I had completely broken up the British navigation in the Pacific; the vessels which have not been captured by me were laid up and dared not venture out." The injury to the British whale fishery he estimated at not less than two and a half million dollars.

Porter trusted to end this exploit with the capture of an enemy frigate; and instead of fleeing when he heard that a force had been sent against him, he lingered on the coast. He had his opportunity; but when it came he had to face the frigate *Phœbe,* much more heavily armed in long guns than the *Essex,* and in addition the sloop of war *Cherub,* their combined power presenting the hopeless odds of eight to one if the battle were fought at long range, where the carronades or short guns of the *Essex* would be useless.

After a blockade of some weeks Porter attempted to make his escape in a storm and very likely would have succeeded if the violent wind that had driven the *Essex* from her anchorage had not shortly afterwards carried away her main topmast.

In the desperate encounter that followed, the British constantly took positions of advantage: first, the *Phœbe* under the stern of the *Essex* and the *Cherub* off her starboard bow; later, both off the port quarter. When Porter with his crippled frigate succeeded in raising some headsails to close, they carefully kept their distance where their long guns were terribly destructive and Porter's carronades were useless. Such an unequal battle could have but one issue; and when it had lasted for over two hours and a half, all but two of the officers of the *Essex* and approximately a third of her crew had been killed or wounded. As a last resort Porter attempted to beach his ship and save his

crew from capture, but he was thwarted by shifting winds; when in addition to all else the ship caught fire, he surrendered.

Little Farragut, not yet thirteen, had certainly had his baptism of fire. There is no story of the engagement more vivid than that told later by him, and for our present purpose the most interesting part is the description of his own duty:

> During the action I was like "Paddy in the cat-harpins," a man on occasions. I performed the duties of captain's aid, quarter-gunner, powder-boy, and in fact did everything that was required of me. I shall never forget the horrid impression made upon me at the sight of the first man I had ever seen killed. He was a boatswain's mate, and was fearfully mutilated. It staggered and sickened me at first; but they soon began to fall around me so fast that it all appeared like a dream and produced no effect on my nerves. . . .
>
> When my services were not required for other purposes, I generally assisted in working a gun; would run and bring powder from the boys, and send them for more, until the captain wanted me to carry a message; and this continued to employ me during the action.
>
> When it was determined to surrender, the captain sent me to ascertain if Mr. —— had the signal-book, and, if so, to throw it overboard. I could not find him or the book for some time; but at last saw the latter lying on the sill of a port, and dashed it into the sea.

During the course of the action, when going down the wardroom ladder after gun primers Farragut was struck by the body of a gun captain who had been felled by an 18-pound shot. The boy, being thrown on his head, was stunned and was covered with the man's blood, but when he came to he continued on the errand for which he had been sent. After the surrender, when the intense excitement was somewhat lessened, his sym-

pathies were all for the wounded and dying. Hearing their groans and seeing their mangled bodies he became sick and faint. But the plucky little fellow, soon recovering his nerve, hastened to assist the surgeon in dressing the wounds. This he did again next morning as the surgeon went his rounds, and he continued thus to serve until sent home a month later with the ship's complement on parole.

Porter mentioned Farragut in his report as deserving "promotion for which he was too young to be recommended." At this time he lacked three months of being thirteen; he assuredly was young, yet he had already shown the strength and character that distinguished his later years.

The four months of his parole he spent in Chester at school. He was eager to learn and always improved such opportunities as came to him. For help in his studies he was particularly indebted during a cruise two years later to Mr. Folsom, a navy chaplain on board his ship; and when Mr. Folsom was appointed consul at Tunis, Farragut secured permission from the Department to remain with him for nine months on shore that his irregular schooling might continue. At another time, while he was still a young man, he happened to be in New Haven for a few months. At once he visited Yale College and, as he happily expressed it, "amused" himself by attending lectures of the professors. "This," he remarked, "was a great treat to me." Again, twenty-five years later in Washington, he showed the same characteristic by attending lectures at the Smithsonian Institution. The information thus obtained may or may not have directly assisted him in his naval career, but there can be no doubt that the habit of mind was invaluable. On this

point we have Farragut's own opinion reported by an officer who first met him after his flag was flying. He says that the admiral observed, "There are comparatively few men from whom one cannot learn something, and a naval officer should always be adding to his knowledge; it might enable him to be more useful some day; it is hard to say what a naval officer might not have to do." If his mind constantly reached out and found recreation in the best of science and literature, it was certainly not less eager in that which related to his own profession. He was a constant student.

The record of his service between the War of 1812 and the Civil War can be passed over quickly. He was not commissioned lieutenant until he reached the age of twenty-four; yet, two years earlier, he had been in command of a schooner engaged in the suppression of piracy in the West Indies. In the Mexican War Farragut, like his foster brother, David Dixon Porter, knowing Vera Cruz, put forward a plan for taking the fortress of San Juan de Ulloa, but no opportunity for distinction was granted him; instead he was detailed to blockade an obscure port, where he very nearly died of yellow fever. He always performed his duty well, yet in 1861, when he was a captain, the Department seems to have had no particular knowledge of his ability.

In April of that year, while secession was being excitedly discussed in Virginia, he happened to be awaiting orders in Norfolk, which for forty years had been his home. The conflict of loyalty, the question of whether allegiance to country or to state should be supreme, was tragic to many; and some found it impossible to make a decision. There was, however, no doubt in Farragut's mind. Nor did he hesitate to express his convictions, even on the morning when it was announced that Vir-

ginia had passed the ordinance of secession. On being threatened that a man of his sentiments "could not live in Norfolk," his calm reply was, "Well, then, I can live somewhere else." That evening, with his wife and son, he took steamer to Baltimore and then went on to New York.

Though he applied at once for a command, he was kept waiting for seven months. The government at this time had reason to be suspicious of all Southerners. At length he was given an opportunity for active service beyond his wildest dreams.

In November and December the President and the Secretary of the Navy were planning an expedition against New Orleans. Who should command the force? Commander Porter, the first to urge the enterprise, suggested Farragut, and his name, as well as those of many other captains, was considered. The high officials conferring not only did not know him but spoke their natural distrust because of his Southern origin and affiliations. However, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Fox (a former naval officer and the practical man of the Department), expressing himself in favor of Farragut, pointed to his quick action in leaving Norfolk, which showed "great superiority of character, clear perception of duty, and firm resolution in the performance of it." And it was this act that Farragut had performed so simply and naturally which was destined to be the most momentous decision he made in all his life.

When he was called to Washington and informed of the expedition, he affirmed without hesitation that it would succeed, and he showed almost a boyish enthusiasm when told he was to command it. He was to have even more ships than he said were required. And though the responsibility for the enterprise was to rest entirely

with the navy, a large contingent of the army was promised to coöperate and to hold what should be captured.

His letter to his wife announcing this most important assignment is characteristic:

> Keep your lips closed and burn my letters, for perfect silence is to be observed—the first injunction of the Secretary. I am to have a flag in the Gulf, and the rest depends upon myself. Keep calm and silent. I shall sail in three weeks.

In the latter part of February, 1862, Farragut arrived at the mouth of the Mississippi. He had come in the strong and almost new sloop of war *Hartford*, which he continued to make his flagship. Slowly his full force was assembled, and then he had a work that required patience and resourcefulness in dragging his large vessels over the bars before the Passes, through the mud into the river, where was deep water. It was almost two months before he had finished his preparation and had his force of seventeen vessels (besides a mortar flotilla under Porter) in the river and ready for active operations; and yet so quietly had he worked that the Confederates had felt little alarm, and, trusting in their defenses below the city, were still held by the obsession that any attack really dangerous to the city must come from the north.

The defenses just referred to consisted of two powerful forts, eighty miles below the city and twenty miles above the Passes. Fort St. Philip, mounting forty-two guns, was on the left bank as one went down the river and, being at a bend, had a wide angle of fire. Fort Jackson, mounting fifty-eight guns, was lower down on the opposite bank and was the stronger. Also the Con-

federates had a flotilla of fifteen gunboats, two of them ironclad rams, and had placed across the river under the guns of Fort Jackson a barrier consisting of two heavy chains supported by a series of hulks.

The attack began 18 April with a bombardment, lasting six days, by Porter's mortar boats. The fire was well directed and, as was learned later, served to weaken the morale of the forts, but gave no promise of actually reducing them. Farragut, having once begun, resolved that he would give no respite to the defenders. On the 20th he considered the last preparations for bringing his ships into action; his plan was to turn all the guns of the fleet on the forts as he steamed past, and if the forts still held out, to leave them and advance boldly on the city.

That morning he had called all his commanding officers to the flagship, not for a council of war to decide what should be done, but for a conference to acquaint them with his plan. Some of the captains and commanders expressed the opinion that it was hazardous to leave in their rear an enemy who would cut them off from supplies. The flag officer, however, had already thought of this and was willing to take the risk, trusting that once above the forts he could command the bayous, which would provide means for bringing up troops from the Gulf. As Captain Bell, Farragut's chief of staff, noted in a memorandum of this conference, "*He* [Farragut] *believed in celerity.*" Farragut's celerity in what followed was plainly a deciding factor.

The officers now joined with the flag officer in making everything ready. That evening Captain Bell with two gunboats opened a wide breach in the chain barrier. A general order instructed each commanding officer how to prepare for the exigencies that were sure to

follow: "Trim your vessel a few inches by the head, so that if she touches the bottom she will not swing head down the river." "Have light Jacob-ladders made to throw over the side for the use of carpenters in stopping shot-holes, who are to be supplied with pieces of inch board lined with felt and ordinary nails." "Have . . . grapnels in the boats, ready to hook on to, and to tow off, fire-ships." "I expect every vessel's crew to be well exercised at their guns, because it is required by the regulations of the service, and it is usually the first object of your attention; but they must be equally well trained for stopping shot-holes and extinguishing fire."

Further, during the afternoon previous to the attack, Farragut visited each ship to make sure that the commanding officer had all in readiness and understood the orders. Though Farragut is popularly known for his simple and skillful maneuvers in battle, in which he insured victory by overwhelming concentration of power, the victory was more than half won before a gun had been fired, because of his remarkable preparation.

To his wife Farragut had written:

> As to being prepared for defeat, I certainly am not. Any man who is prepared for defeat would be half defeated before he commenced. I hope for success; shall do all in my power to secure it, and trust to God for the rest.

Two o'clock in the morning, 24 April, 1862, was the time set for the attacking fleet to get under way. Two red lights displayed from the flagship gave the signal, and soon the clinkclank of the anchor chains returned a spirited answer. The ships were to proceed in single column in three divisions: the first led by Captain Bailey in the *Cayuga*, the second by Farragut in the *Hartford*, and the third by Bell in the *Sciota*.

The head of the first division was nearly abreast of the forts before they opened fire. The little *Cayuga* was too light to deal with such powerful foes, so she sped along; but the *Pensacola* coming next, armed with twenty-three heavy guns, steamed slowly as she passed St. Philip, at times stopping to return the fire. Meanwhile the mortar flotilla had moved forward to shell the forts.

Twenty-five minutes after the *Cayuga* had begun the attack the *Hartford* was opening on Fort Jackson. The darkness and smoke, together with the terrific fire from the forts, made it difficult for the ships to keep their course or to distinguish friend from foe. Suddenly, out of the gloom, Farragut saw a fire raft coming directly for his ship. In the attempt to avoid it the *Hartford* straightway grounded on a shoal near Fort St. Philip. Under the heavy fire of the forts she was in a trying position; in addition a Confederate tugboat, till then unnoticed, was pushing the fire raft down upon her. In an instant the port quarter of the *Hartford* was a mass of flames which, licking the paint, rose halfway to the top. It was a desperate moment in which hesitation or panic would have been fatal; but Farragut had been preparing for just such an emergency. A part of the crew went to "fire quarters" to subdue the flames; a part kept their stations at the guns, doing their part in defending the ship; meanwhile the engines backed the ship off the shoal, and again she headed up the river. According to Watson, his flag lieutenant, the admiral stood during these critical moments coolly giving orders and watching the ship slowly turn, occasionally referring to a small compass on his watch chain.

The *Brooklyn*, Captain Craven, which followed the *Hartford*, also had her ordeal. On coming to the barrier

she mistook her course, and, instead of passing through the opening, ran over one of the rafts carrying the chains. While entangled by this she fell athwart the stream and received a heavy fire from Fort St. Philip. When freed from the barrier, with her head turned again upstream, she had an encounter with the ram *Manassas*. Craven writes:

> The latter came butting into our starboard gangway, first firing from her trapdoor, when within about ten feet of the ship, directly toward our smokestack, her shot entering about five feet above the waterline and lodging in the sandbags which protected our steam drum. . . . I was so close to him that he had not an opportunity to get up his full speed, and his efforts to damage me were completely frustrated, our chain armor proving a perfect protection to our sides. He soon slid off and disappeared in the darkness.

Craven was next attacked by a large Confederate steamer; but discharging his port broadside at a distance of only fifty or sixty yards he set fire to his last assailant and thus terminated her career. Then groping his way in the dark, under the cloud of smoke caused by a fire raft, he suddenly found himself close abreast of St. Philip. Turning his guns on the works, he deluged them with grape and canister; his crew in the tops reported that they could see by the flashes of bursting shrapnel the gunners running for cover.

For the gunboats of the first division the fight was not ended when they had passed the forts; the Confederates had a flotilla of thirteen gunboats and two ironclads awaiting them. The *Cayuga*, which had trusted to speed for safety, emerged from the smoke and confusion to find herself entirely alone. Lieutenant George H. Perkins, who was acting as pilot of the *Cayuga*, writes as follows:

I looked back for some of our vessels, and my heart jumped into my mouth when I found I could not see a single one. I thought they all must have been sunk by the forts. Then looking ahead I saw eleven of the enemy's gunboats coming down upon us, and it seemed as if we were "gone" sure. Three made a dash to board us, but a heavy charge from our 11-inch gun settled the *Governor Moore*, which was one of them. A ram, the *Manassas*, in attempting to butt us, just missed our stern, and we soon settled the third fellow's "hash." Just then some of our gunboats, which had passed the forts, came up, and then all sorts of things happened. There was the wildest excitement all round. The *Varuna* fired a broadside into us, instead of the enemy. Another of our gunboats attacked one of the *Cayuga's* prizes. I shouted out, "Don't fire into that ship, she has surrendered!" Three of the enemy's ships had surrendered to us before any of our vessels appeared, but when they did come up we all pitched in and settled the eleven Rebel vessels in about twenty minutes.

The gunboat *Varuna* of the first division, rammed by two Confederate gunboats in this phase of the battle, had to make for the shore to avoid sinking. She was the only ship lost. Three gunboats of the third division, the last to attempt the passing of the forts, without the support of the heavy ships, had a hard time of it. One receiving a shot through her boiler was disabled and drifted back. The other two after being entangled in the chain-barrier could not stand the concentrated fire of the forts. Finally all three joined Porter's division below.

When Farragut collected his forces at Quarantine, five miles above the forts, he had thirteen vessels. Believing that now he could coöperate with the army, he sent a messenger to General Butler, commanding the troops, and, leaving two gunboats to safeguard their landing, slowly steamed on to New Orleans.

Before noon of the following day the ships had reached the city. Farragut writes:

> All the morning I had seen abundant evidence of the panic which had seized the people of New Orleans. Cotton-loaded ships on fire came floating down, and working implements of every kind, such as are used in shipyards; the destruction of property was awful. . . . The levee of New Orleans was one scene of desolation; ships, steamers, cotton, coal, etc., were all in one common blaze, and our ingenuity was much taxed to avoid the floating conflagration. . . .
>
> We now passed up to the city and anchored immediately in front of it, and I sent Captain Bailey on shore to demand the surrender of it from the authorities, to which the mayor replied that the city was under martial law, and that he had no authority. General Lovell, who was present, stated that he should deliver up nothing, but, in order to free the city from embarrassment, he would restore the city authorities and retire with his troops, which he did.

In the further negotiations Farragut showed his tact and wisdom in state affairs even as he had done previously in fighting. The mayor continued evasive and exasperating, and the flag of Louisiana still flew defiantly from the city hall. Though Farragut had New Orleans helpless under his guns, he had no troops to occupy it, and he shrank from the idea of bombardment, which would involve the killing of women and children and the ruin of the city. But, simple and direct as he always was, he persisted in his demand and gained what he sought. The United States flag was raised from the city hall and the government buildings and remained there—a real evidence of the Confederates' submission to his authority.

Four days after Farragut's arrival at New Orleans, Captain Bailey brought the welcome news that Forts

Jackson and St. Philip had surrendered. There had been no necessity of immediate capitulation; but the boldness and power of Farragut in passing them, following right on the heels of the bombardment by Porter's mortars, had plainly demoralized them. Moreover, when Farragut had got between them and New Orleans, he had assumed a strategic position of the first importance, for he could control their communications; without fresh supplies they might hold out for days or weeks, but not for months.

Running past the forts below New Orleans was an exploit of surprising boldness. The Confederates had had the utmost confidence in their defenses and, believing they could annihilate any fleet coming within reach of their guns, had been slow in strengthening their works. Nor was doubt as to success limited to the enemies of the North. Even some officers who had taken part in the preparation were skeptical, seeing in Farragut's plan something of recklessness.

The carrying through of this difficult operation with scarcely a hitch produced a profound impression in 1862, a year generally barren of results. Farragut gained remarkable prestige; hereafter officers and men were glad to serve under him, for he led them to victory. The influence of this achievement was felt not only throughout the country but even in Europe, where at this very time Napoleon III was proposing that France and England recognize the South, send a combined fleet to the Mississippi, and demand an open port for their merchantmen. This would have been a dangerous threat to the blockade, which was absolutely essential to the winning of the war.

In recognition of the excellent service rendered by the navy, many promotions occurred at this time. The

grade of rear admiral was created, and in July, 1862, four captains were advanced to this rank. As Farragut was the senior of the four he may be said to have been the first in the United States Navy to fly an admiral's flag.

Farragut's career in the Civil War comprises four major engagements. Of these the second, the passing of Vicksburg shortly after the capture of New Orleans (an expedition undertaken because the Department ordered it, but attempted without the support of the army and against the judgment of Farragut), was the only one that brought no lasting result. He carried his fleet through to safety and made contact with the Mississippi River Squadron to the north, but with the approach of summer and the decreasing depth of water in the river he had to fall back again unless he were to imperil his seagoing fleet. It was the first engagement, directed against New Orleans, and the last, against Mobile, that gave Farragut his chief fame, but we should give a wrong perspective if we did not call attention also to the third, that directed against Port Hudson; this, though overshadowed by operations about Vicksburg occurring at the same time, was of unquestioned value in the long struggle of gaining the entire Mississippi for the Union.

In the early part of the year 1863 Farragut was in the Mississippi above New Orleans waiting for troops that had been promised to advance with him upon Port Hudson, where the Confederates, taking advantage of bluffs from eighty to one hundred feet high on the east side of the river at a point where the river makes a sharp right angle to the west, had constructed a fort inferior only to that of Vicksburg and garrisoned by sixteen thousand troops. Only a few miles above, the Red River flows into the Mississippi; and by this

excellent thoroughfare the Confederates were bringing a continuous line of supplies from Louisiana as well as from Arkansas and Texas—supplies that maintained their forces in Vicksburg and Port Hudson and even some of those in Virginia.

Porter, operating above Vicksburg, attempted to blockade the mouth of the Red River and sent down two of his ironclads, the *Queen of the West* and the *Indianola*. As will be told in the next chapter, they were promptly captured by the Confederates. Farragut saw the necessity of intercepting their communications, and to accomplish this he determined on taking past Port Hudson the seven ships he had below waiting for Banks's army.

The formation of his column, when he had everything arranged for the passage on the night of 14 March, 1863, was unusual and well thought out. His main fighting units, three heavy sloops of war (the first of which was the *Hartford*), were each to have a gunboat lashed to the port side. This had the double advantage of affording protection to the lighter craft and of giving auxiliary power to the larger ship if she should be disabled by the enemy's fire. At the end of the column came the large side-wheeler the *Mississippi*. Since her protruding wheelhouses made her an awkward consort for a gunboat, she steamed alone.

As one considers Farragut's disposition of his force and his other preparations, there can be no comment except that of admiration. His general orders show a naval genius, and for lucidity and vigor should be compared with those of no other than Nelson. The following is an example:

> The captain will bear in mind that the object is to run the batteries at the least possible damage to our ships, and thereby secure an efficient force above for the purpose of

rendering such assistance as may be required of us to the army at Vicksburg, or, if not required there, to our army at Baton Rouge. . . . *The best protection against the enemy's fire is a well-directed fire from our own guns.*

The last sentence has embodied in it so much of strategy and sound principle that it has become one of the slogans of our navy.

At Port Hudson the Confederates did not repeat the mistake made at New Orleans of being caught unprepared. The moment the *Hartford*, with the *Albatross* on her protected side, approached within range, bonfires on the point opposite the city and the batteries were kindled, lighting up the scene and making the ships stand out. The *Hartford* and the other sloops trained their heavy Dahlgrens on the batteries, but soon they were enveloped in smoke, which, as there was no wind, hung heavy over the water. This slightly shielded the fleet from the enemy's fire, but it made navigation increasingly difficult.

Even on the leading ships the pilots had their difficulties, and Farragut stopped firing until he could draw out of the smoke. One of his wise precautions had been to station the chief pilot in the mizzentop of the *Hartford*, connected with the deck by a speaking-tube, and it is likely that this saved the *Hartford* and the *Albatross*. Notwithstanding all his careful preparations, when they reached the sharp bend in the river the strong current swung them around and they touched on the shoal; but by backing the *Albatross* hard and going ahead with the *Hartford*, Farragut succeeded in freeing them and heading again upstream. Not delaying further to engage the batteries, he steamed on to a safe anchorage. Then he awaited in vain the five other ships.

The *Richmond* suffered an engine trouble because of an unlucky shot; the *Monongahela* ran aground, and when she was released by the aid of her companion, a crank-pin had become heated, and her engine stopped. In consequence these two with their accompanying gunboats dropped back to their original position. The fifth vessel, the side-wheeler *Mississippi*, was driven by her pilot hard on the shoal, where she was a perfect target. When her captain, Melancthon Smith, and her lieutenant, George Dewey (the future admiral), had tried every expedient for releasing her, without success, orders were given to set fire to her, the crew escaping to the west shore. Farragut received the first news of her fate by watching the flames as they leaped from yard-arm to yardarm and finally enveloped the whole ship. In the early morning she floated down the river and blew up.

It is manifest that Farragut, with but two ships above Port Hudson, could not patrol the river as he might have done if he had succeeded in taking all his force with him. The task was a difficult one in a country where Confederate troops and guerrilla bands abounded. But, nevertheless, he succeeded in blockading the Red River and thus made his presence very positively felt.

What Porter thought of the result of the engagement is shown by his letter to Farragut:

> Your services at Red River will be a godsend; it is worth to us the loss of the *Mississippi*, and is at this moment the severest blow that could be struck at the South. They obtain all their supplies and ammunition in that way.... The great object is to cut off supplies. For that reason I sent down the *Queen of the West* and the *Indianola*. I regret that the loss of the *Indianola* should have been the cause of your present position.

Three days after Farragut's exploit a Confederate commissary in Taylor's department, according to Mahan, thus expressed his view of the new situation:

> Great God! how unfortunate! Four steamers arrived today from Shreveport. One had 300,000 pounds of bacon; three others are reported coming down with loads. Five others are reported with full cargoes designed for Port Hudson, but it is reported that the Federal gunboats are blockading the river.

Finally we have Farragut's own opinion. Always modest, he was apt, if anything, to underrate his own services. He wrote to his home:

> We have done our part of the work assigned to us, and all has worked well. My last dash past Port Hudson was the best thing I ever did, except taking New Orleans. It assisted materially in the fall of Vicksburg and Port Hudson.

Vicksburg, as will be described in the next chapter, surrendered on 4 July, 1863, and Port Hudson capitulated five days later.

Farragut was now in need of rest, and the *Hartford*, the *Brooklyn*, and the *Richmond* required extensive overhauling. Accordingly he turned over to Porter the command of the Mississippi above New Orleans and sailed for New York. Long before his return in January, 1864, in fact, since the fall of New Orleans, Mobile had filled his thoughts. It was the Confederates' principal port for the shipment of cotton. Although the blockade was regarded as technically effective, it constantly happened that swift blockade runners, creeping along the shore on a dark night, would make a bold dash and gain the protection of the forts commanding the entrance to the bay before the Union ships could come up with them.

Fort Morgan, the largest of the three forts defending the bay, was a strong work mounting eighty-six guns, dominating the main channel. Its strength was augmented by three gunboats and the ironclad *Tennessee*, built on the general lines of the *Merrimac* and reputed to be the most powerful craft afloat.

After making a reconnaissance Farragut had told the Department that for a successful attack he must have an ironclad and troops. Securing them meant a delay of several months, but Farragut waited. It was late in July before the troops arrived, and the 4th of August when the four monitors designated made their appearance. On the 5th of August, 1864, Farragut steamed forward to give battle.

His well-considered preparations were like those before New Orleans; and, as at Port Hudson, since the heavy gunfire of the land batteries would be all on the starboard side, he had his fourteen wooden vessels proceed in couples, a light gunboat in each case being lashed on the protected side of a strong partner.

It was to be a desperate engagement, as Farragut realized. The letter written the evening before to his wife should be compared with Nelson's to Lady Hamilton before Trafalgar; a whole biography could not more clearly reveal his character.

My dearest Wife: I write and leave this letter for you. I am going into Mobile Bay in the morning, if God is my leader, as I hope He is, and in Him I place my trust. If He thinks it is the proper place for me to die, I am ready to submit to His will, in that as all other things. . . .

Your devoted and affectionate husband, who never for one moment forgot his love, duty, or fidelity to you, his devoted and best of wives,

D. G. Farragut.

There were two favoring conditions that he desired in making the attack: a flood tide, and a westerly wind to blow the smoke of the guns from the ships upon Fort Morgan. Early on the morning mentioned he had both.

The Union column was led by the *Brooklyn*, Captain James Alden, with the *Octorora*, Lieutenant Commander Charles Green. Following them came the flagship *Hartford*, Captain Percival Drayton, and the *Metacomet*, Lieutenant Commander James E. Jouett. The four monitors, with the *Tecumseh* leading, formed a column to starboard and in advance so as to engage the forts when, during the approach of the wooden ships, the latter would not be able to use their broadsides.

Fort Morgan opened on the fleet shortly after seven, and for nearly half an hour Farragut could reply only with his bow chasers. The admiral had taken a position in the port main rigging, and as the smoke rose he climbed higher until he was close to the maintop. Drayton, feeling anxious for his safety, ordered a seaman to pass a rope about him and secure him there. As the leading ships began to draw abreast the fort they brought their broadsides into play, and soon the admiral had the satisfaction of seeing the Confederate gunners being driven from the barbettes and water batteries. But the Union advantage was of short duration; in a moment the battle was all but lost.

Commander Craven of the *Tecumseh* had early marked as his especial antagonist the dreaded ram *Tennessee*, which with the gunboats had emerged from under cover of the fort. As he saw her steaming slowly to the west, fearful that she might elude him he made a dash for her. There is a difference of opinion as to just what happened. Some thought that Craven in his impetuosity disregarded the admiral's orders to steam

to the east of a certain red buoy reported to mark the extremity of a line of torpedoes blocking the entrance to the west and leaving but a narrow ship channel between the buoy and the fort; others, also eye-witnesses, said she was well in the channel, but ran on a mine which had gone adrift. Whatever the cause, a muffled roar was heard; the *Tecumseh* reeled, lurched, and sank headforemost. So quickly did she go down that one hundred and thirteen men out of a complement of one hundred and thirty-five were carried down with her. Commander Craven was among the lost. It is related by the one who was with him in the conning tower that as both reached for the ladder, the only means of escape, Craven drew back, saying, "After you, pilot." The commander's noble courtesy cost him his life.

Lookouts on the *Brooklyn* reporting torpedo buoys ahead, her captain, Alden, backed his engines and then stopped. He was signaled by the admiral to go ahead; but either he did not see the signal or, with torpedoes ahead and monitors close on his starboard beam, he did not know how to obey, for he remained motionless. Meanwhile the other ships behind the *Hartford* were still steaming forward, and the column threatened to become hopelessly tangled up right under the guns of Fort Morgan. Already the defenders, seeing the confusion, were firing with increased vigor.

Farragut from the rigging of the *Hartford* had seen all the sad reverses. On his starboard bow were the *Brooklyn* and the *Octorora* athwart the channel, on his starboard beam were the monitors *Winnebago* and *Chickasaw*, and the fleet was rapidly massing together so that in a minute more even retreat would be impossible. It was, as Mahan terms it, "the supreme moment

of his life." On a right and immediate decision depended the crowning success of a long naval career. An error would mean defeat of terrible costliness to the Union and a tragic sequel to his own brilliant operations on the Mississippi. Says Mahan:

> In later days Farragut told that in the confusion of these moments, feeling that all his plans had been thwarted, he was at a loss whether to advance or retreat. In this extremity the devout spirit that ruled his life, and so constantly appears in his correspondence, impelled him to appeal to Heaven for guidance, and he offered up this prayer: "O God, who created man and gave him reason, direct me what to do. Shall I go on?" "And it seemed," said the admiral, "as if in answer a voice commanded, 'Go on!'"

Farragut decided to take the lead himself; and since he was barred from the safe course to starboard, he determined to pass to port. Ordering the *Hartford* to drive her engine forward, and the *Metacomet* to back hers, he twisted short around and headed north toward the line of torpedoes. Straightway there came from the *Brooklyn* a warning cry of torpedoes ahead.

"Damn the torpedoes!" shouted the admiral. "Four bells! Captain Drayton, go ahead! Jouett, full speed!" And in his disdain of personal danger and his complete absorption in the high service to which he felt called, rarely has a sailor's language expressed a loftier sentiment.

The *Hartford* and the *Metacomet* crossed the perilous line, and men on board said they heard some of the primers snap, but no explosion occurred. The *Brooklyn* and the *Octorora* followed in their wake, and the column straightened out as by magic. The *Tennessee*, commanded by Admiral Buchanan (the first superintendent of the Naval Academy), attempted to ram each in

turn as she entered the bay, but without success. The *Metacomet* was sent in pursuit of the Confederate gunboat *Selma* and captured her, the other Confederate gunboats with the *Tennessee* withdrawing to the protection of the fort.

When the Union vessels one by one had reached a position four miles above Fort Morgan, where there was a large basin, they were directed to anchor. Farragut had in part accomplished his purpose, for he had entered the bay with all his ships except the *Tecumseh*; but his mind dwelt on their strongest foe, which they would have to meet again, and he resolved to attack her that very evening with the monitors under the fort. Before the last ships had come to anchor, however, it was announced that the *Tennessee* was standing out, and later that she was heading for the Union flagship.

Mess gear was hurriedly put away, and preparations were made for another engagement. The stronger wooden ships were ordered to attack "not only with their guns, but bows on at full speed." The monitors were to join the fray as they found opportunity.

The *Monongahela* began the second encounter. She struck the *Tennessee* a blow that carried away her own iron prow and cutwater but did no injury to the Confederate. The *Lackawanna* followed close after and struck her at full speed, but again it was the attacking ship that suffered most. The *Lackawanna* received two destructive shells through her bows, but in return she fired a 9-inch shell that destroyed one of the enemy's port shutters, driving the fragments into the casemate.

The *Hartford* was the third champion to challenge the ram. Her blow, however, was a glancing one, for the ram had turned on her approach. As the

Hartford scraped past she fired her entire port broadside of 9-inch guns, but the shot bounded off with no effect. The *Tennessee* was able to fire only one shell in reply, but this killed five men and wounded eight. When the two vessels were together, Farragut, who had been standing on the quarter-deck, jumped on the rail, holding to the port mizzen rigging, just above the ram.

Both the *Hartford* and the *Lackawanna* now attempted to charge again on the ram, but the *Lackawanna* instead came crashing into her own flagship, just forward of the mizzenmast, cutting the hull down within two feet of the water. In a moment Farragut was climbing over the side to see the extent of the damage. "Immediately," says Captain Drayton, "there was a general cry all round, 'Get the admiral out of the ship!' and the whole interest of everyone near was that he should be in a place of safety."

In the meantime the monitors were making themselves felt. The *Manhattan* planted a 15-inch shot that penetrated the armor and woodwork of the casemate and was held only by the netting inside. And the double-turreted monitor *Chickasaw*, commanded by Lieutenant Commander George H. Perkins (the youngest of Farragut's captains), secured a position under the stern of the *Tennessee*, and there she stuck, as the Confederate pilot remarked, "like a leech."

A shot carried away the wheel chains of the *Tennessee* which, by poor designing, lay exposed on deck. Next an 11-inch ball from the *Chickasaw*, striking a port cover, killed a machinist who was working there and, throwing iron splinters, mortally wounded a gunner and broke Admiral Buchanan's leg.

Johnston, to whom Buchanan then gave over the command, did his utmost to save the vessel, but that

was very little. The relieving tackles, by which he was steering, were shot away, and the tiller was unshipped from the rudderhead. The smokestack had carried away, and steam was going down rapidly. Port covers had been so jammed that in the last half-hour the *Tennessee* was unable to fire a shot. During this period the *Chickasaw* had kept up a persistent pounding from her position under the stern, never more than fifty yards away. All together she fired fifty-two 11-inch shot.

Convinced that the *Tennessee*, which lay helpless as a log, was only a target for the Union ships, Johnston went out on the casemate and, hauling down his colors, hoisted a white flag.

The engagement ended at ten o'clock, having lasted nearly three hours. The losses of the Union fleet were large; for, in addition to those who went down on the *Tecumseh*, there were fifty-two killed and one hundred and seventy wounded. The *Hartford* suffered more severely than any other ship; twenty-five of the killed, or nearly one half, were of her crew.

The minor forts were taken within two days. Fort Morgan defiantly refused to surrender and held out for more than two weeks. Farragut could afford to wait till he had all ready; then opening with the fleet, the three monitors, the captured *Tennessee*, and heavy siege guns, he took it after just one day's bombardment. He had now entire control of the bay and could seal it to all blockade runners. The capture of Mobile itself would require a large army, and with this he did not concern himself.

The victory aroused great rejoicing and was timely, for a presidential election was about to take place, and the question was to be decided whether or not the war

policy of the preceding three years and a half should be upheld and the struggle be carried on to a victorious conclusion. As Seward remarked, Sherman's victory on land and Farragut's at sea knocked the bottom out of the opposing nominations.

Fifty years later the essential features of the fight below New Orleans and at Mobile Bay were met again in war, and as the tragic tale of Gallipoli is read the greatness of Farragut stands out the more boldly. Although to force the Dardanelles was assuredly a much more difficult undertaking than to run past the forts in the Mississippi, there was a much greater force of ships and troops to accomplish it. It is easy now to see that at Gallipoli the reconnaissance and the early bombardments gave the defenders warning to expect an attack and to strengthen their weak fortifications, and that the Allied offensive began when the weather was uncertain and before troops were available for coöperation. At New Orleans and Mobile Bay, it will be recalled, Farragut would make no hostile demonstration till all the fleet were assembled and ready and till troops were at hand to coöperate. At first some of his spirited young officers thought him obstinately slow; but when he struck, he moved with such swiftness as to gain all the advantage of surprise, and with a perfect shower of blows he paralyzed the defense.

It is strange, though not entirely without precedent, that an officer who showed such genius after reaching the age of sixty-one should have attracted so little attention before that time. In this Farragut was unlike Nelson, who from early life dominated every situation; yet, as a few that were discerning recognized, there was power behind his quiet, modest, self-effacing

manner. When finally the great opportunity was offered him, with calm assurance we see him rising to every emergency. Fortune then inclined to his side. Though in each great engagement he suffered reverses such as might have turned back any ordinary commanding officer, yet because his carefully wrought plans were based on right principles and because he kept heroically on, he won.

The government voiced the nation-wide appreciation by making Farragut a vice admiral in 1864 and an admiral in 1866, the latter the very highest naval honor, such as had never been conferred before and has been conferred only twice since. The memory of what Farragut had done, and the desire for the future to do as Farragut would have done, was to make a new tradition in the United States Navy.

CHAPTER IX

DAVID DIXON PORTER (1813–1891)

NO AMERICAN naval officer of distinction saw more continuous fighting in the Civil War or in any other conflict than Porter saw between the years 1861 and 1865. At the beginning of the war he was a lieutenant; at its end he was a rear admiral; a year later he rose to vice admiral; and four years after that he reached the supreme rank, which only Farragut had enjoyed before him.

If there is such a thing as a man's being prepared by family tradition for special service, Porter had that fortune. His grandfather and granduncle commanded ships in the American Revolution; his father, the renowned Commodore David Porter of the War of 1812 (having previously served in the French and Tripolitan wars), had linked his name for all time with that of the frigate *Essex*. So perhaps it is not strange that in the next generation David Dixon Porter (the subject of this sketch), his three brothers, and his foster brother, Farragut, should have added renown to an already distinguished family.

Young Porter, like Farragut, sailed on his first cruise at the age of ten. At fifteen, as a midshipman in the Mexican Navy, he took part in a battle with the Spaniards in which the commanding officer, his cousin, was killed, a third of the complement were killed or wounded, and he himself was taken prisoner. On at-

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taining the age of sixteen he became a midshipman in the United States Navy. In the years of somewhat commonplace duty which followed it is interesting to note that in 1845, when assigned to the Naval Observatory, he came under the gifted naval scientist Maury. Already he had had six years of duty in the Coast Survey, service he was to turn to good account later in the making of reconnaissances.

At the outbreak of the Mexican War he had applied for active duty, and he chafed on being sent to New Orleans for three months of recruiting. Finally, in February, 1847, he was ordered to Vera Cruz just in time for the attack on that place. He was first lieutenant of the *Spitfire*, a tiny side-wheeler of 200 or 300 tons' burden under Commander Josiah Tattnall. At once he formulated a plan for effecting a breach in the walls of the imposing fortress San Juan de Ulloa at the entrance of the harbor by exploding at night a submarine charge and then seizing the fortress with fifty picked men. He had known the fortress as a boy, and he desired nothing better than to lead the men in person. The plan, however, got no farther than an obscure pigeonhole of the Navy Department.

As General Scott with the army began an attack on the city, Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry, commanding the fleet, lay in a safe position outside. Porter, however, longed to take part in the fighting, and to his joy Tattnall was of the same mood. The night before the attack Porter had crept about in a boat making soundings in the harbor. Next morning, as the troops fired on the city, the little *Spitfire* followed by the *Vixen*, each with two schooners in tow (constituting the Mosquito Division), boldly steamed in between the forts San Juan and Santiago. Porter, piloting the

division, led them on until they had reached a position within grapeshot distance of Santiago and almost as near San Juan, and then opened on the city. Perry had not been informed of their design; with the fleet and the army he looked on with amazement as the flotilla fired away and soon drew the combined fire of the forts. Shot and shell splashed about them, but they calmly continued their attack. Perry had no liking for the surprise and signaled them to withdraw, but Tattnall saw only the enemy he was fighting and doggedly held to the attack until Perry sent his fleet captain Mayo on board the *Spitfire* and peremptorily ordered the division to withdraw. Tattnall and Porter had rightly estimated the ineffective gunnery of the Mexican forts. Of course the little flotilla could not have reduced them; but daring of this kind was contagious, and it was such spirit that enabled the small American forces to win against absurd odds.

The adventure brought Porter neither promotion nor official recognition; and at the beginning of the Civil War he was, as he had been for twenty years, only a lieutenant. Nevertheless, before fighting actually began he received, to his surprise, a note from the Secretary of State requesting his presence. At the Secretary's a captain of the army also appeared, and all went to the White House to confer with President Lincoln as to how Fort Pickens and the Pensacola Navy Yard might be saved for the Union. Porter was sure it could be done; and almost immediately he was given command of the *Powhatan* and sent on a secret mission for this purpose. Unfortunately, at Fort Pickens he found officers, higher in rank, who through timidity or inefficiency blocked every move on his part; and so the yard with its valuable guns was lost.

During the latter part of the spring Porter took a minor part in the great blockade of the Southern coast, being stationed off the Southwest Pass of the Mississippi. For every officer blockade duty was dreary business. But even though his ship was lolling lazily about, Porter's mind was busy. As a result, on his return to Washington in November he presented a carefully worked out plan for the capture of New Orleans. He was full of enthusiasm, and he was himself so thoroughly convinced of the practicability of his plan that he quickly won over two senators and then the Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, before whom he laid the scheme. The Secretary took him to the President, who at once grasped its essentials and remarked: "This should have been done sooner. The Mississippi is the key to the whole situation." Within twenty-four hours after Porter's arrival his plan had secured adoption.

Had Porter's rank admitted it he would undoubtedly have been given command of the expedition. As the work of preparation went forward he was constantly consulted; and he had the pleasure of suggesting the leader, an officer little known to the Department at Washington, Farragut. Furthermore, he was placed in command of the mortar flotilla, a separate division consisting of twenty-seven craft, which was to work in coöperation with the fleet under Farragut. Though only a commander, he was given a responsibility such as was bestowed upon no one of the dozen officers under Farragut who were his seniors, each of whom commanded but a single ship.

When Farragut's fleet had in April, 1862, been led over the bars at the Passes and assembled in the lower reaches of the Mississippi, there came the highly neces-

sary work of reconnaissance. This Farragut placed entirely in Porter's hands. Before the forts could be attacked or passed it was imperative that the Union forces should know the course of the rapid and tortuous river, the nature of the obstructions, and also the position of the batteries and the ranges. Because of Porter's experience with the Coast Survey he was particularly well qualified to direct the force, borrowed from the superintendent of the Coast Survey, which he had brought with him in anticipation of just such a need. According to Soley, Porter's biographer, he had a consultation each morning with the chief of the Coast Survey party and laid out their work:

> Each day the surveying parties set out in their boats under the protection of steamers of the flotilla assigned to the duty, and were landed with their theodolites at the selected points on one bank or the other, with an armed escort to keep off the enemy's scouting parties, and pursued their appointed tasks until the work of the day was finished. Each evening they returned to the *Sachem* and mapped out the localities from their notes. In four or five days the course of the river and both its banks, for a distance of seven miles, were triangulated and mapped, and the maps were supplied to the fleet.

After this Porter had the surveyors mark points with flags one hundred yards apart on both banks where the mortar vessels were to take stations. When the actual attack on the forts began, the mortars gave their attention chiefly to Fort Jackson, each firing every ten minutes, making two shots a minute for the whole flotilla. They were concealed in part by the shrubbery of the banks; and in order that the masts of the schooners might not give away their position to the enemy (who fired furiously in reply, attempting to

search them out), Porter had the mastheads dressed with bushes, which were renewed as often as they were shot away. Occasionally the enemy got the range, and their fire would become destructive; but then Porter would move the schooners a few hundred yards to a new position where for a while there was safety.

Porter's careful study of position and range had its result. General Duncan, commanding the Confederate defenses below New Orleans, spoke in his official report of the first day's bombardment as follows:

> The quarters in the bastion were fired and burned down early in the day, as well as all the quarters immediately without the fort. The citadel was set on fire and extinguished several times during the first part of the day, but later it became impossible to put out the flames, so that when the enemy ceased firing it was one burning mass, greatly endangering the magazines, which at one time were reported to be on fire.

The bombardment continued for six days, and though it did not reduce the forts, it served to shake the morale of the defenders. It is doubtful if Porter, after he had made his reconnaissance, expected more than this; but, like the terrible artillery preparation before general attacks on the western front in the World War, his mortar fire had no small part in the ultimate success.

When Farragut began the passage of the forts early in the morning of 24 April, as has been described, every effort was made to enable the head of the column to slip past unobserved; but when the gunners in the forts had espied the phantom ships and were seeking to overwhelm them by their concentrated fire, the mortars began a terrific bombardment, directing their fire, as they had hitherto, on the nearer and more

formidable Fort Jackson. On this the mortars fired ten shells a minute, and so nearly smothered it that the fleet passed without difficulty and had only Fort St. Philip seriously to reckon with.

When the fleet had reached a point of safety up the river, Porter signaled by rocket for the mortar schooners to cease firing, and he withdrew his force down the river. When dawn came he sent under flag of truce a demand for the surrender of the forts. This being refused, he began another day's bombardment, which brought very little return from the fort. "The fight had all been taken out of them," commented Porter. Three days later he sent another demand for surrender; and since by this time a mutiny had occurred among the disaffected troops in Fort Jackson, this demand was soon complied with, and both forts capitulated. There was justice in the fact that the officer who had suggested and assisted in planning the expedition, and who had labored untiringly with Farragut to make it a success, should have been the one to receive the surrender of the forts.

A few months after this, when Porter had been ordered with his mortar flotilla to engage in important operations on the James River, an accident occurred, seemingly rather trivial, but containing an important lesson, for it well-nigh cost Porter his career. While waiting for troops he had gone to Newport to snatch a brief rest with his family. He was always impulsive and outspoken, and at the club in Newport he allowed himself to be drawn into a semipolitical discussion on the comparative merits of Union and Confederate generals. Apparently a secret-service agent who heard him so reported his words as to raise a doubt as to his loyalty. He was promptly called to Washington to find that his

orders had been changed. He was now slated for some subordinate and unimportant duty of inspection at St. Louis. He tried to see the Secretary of the Navy, but without success. Before he left Washington he called upon the President, who, instead of treating him as a suspect, made him go over all the incidents of the New Orleans campaign and explain the further problems of the Mississippi. As a result of this talk with the President he soon received a communication informing him that he had been selected to command the Mississippi Squadron:

> You will therefore proceed to Cairo, Ill., by the 12th instant and report to Acting Rear Admiral Charles H. Davis, who will transfer the command of that squadron to yourself, when you will immediately hoist your flag as acting rear admiral.

Porter was to command the forces on the Mississippi and its tributaries from St. Louis to Vicksburg. Below Vicksburg operations were still under the direction of Farragut. Here began what is probably Porter's greatest service in the war—coöperation with Grant in his famous campaign against Vicksburg, which ended in its capture the following summer.

Vicksburg was almost the last stronghold left to the Confederates on the Mississippi, and it was one of remarkable strength, the city occupying an impregnable position on high bluffs which extended from Haynes's Bluff, thirteen miles northeast on the Yazoo, to Warrenton, six miles south on the Mississippi. The Union Army had come south from Cairo, following the river on solid land and depending on the fleet for communications, but as they neared Vicksburg they found it impossible to go farther during the winter and spring.

There were no roads; and the country, being low and swampy and cut up by rivers and bayous, was absolutely impassable. In the fall of 1862 Grant had attempted to take Vicksburg by a wide detour from the north and east, but Washington had so reduced his force as to prevent his success. The avenue of approach which he was eventually to employ—from the west and south—he had considered; but he was forced to delay campaigning from this direction for the reason that the Confederate batteries at Vicksburg dominated the river, making it hazardous for armored gunboats to attempt the passing and worse than hazardous for army transports. Swollen streams had inundated much of the country, so that the army could not be marched down on the west bank until the bottom lands dried up. Meanwhile Porter was willing to see what could be done in turning the Confederates' right flank through the Yazoo Delta. Two attempts were made, both calling for a combined expedition of the army and the navy and both devised by Porter. Though both were failures, the second, in which Porter commanded the naval forces in person, was noteworthy for the initiative and determination he exhibited.

The plan depended for success on surprise. It required that five ironclads, together with mortar boats and tugs, followed by Sherman's corps in transports, reach the Yazoo River above the formidable batteries at Haynes's Bluff by traversing Steele's Bayou and a complicated network of rivers and creeks, all together about one hundred and thirty miles in length, which led to the rear of Vicksburg's defenses.

During the first of their course, progress was rapid; but as the river narrowed, trees which overhung the banks caught the smokestacks, and water-soaked logs

had to be fished out to afford a channel. Then their speed slowed down at times to half a mile an hour.

Even then there was a possibility of success if there had not been a lack of coördination in the movements of the army and navy. The former, through a misunderstanding, for several days delayed their advances. Thus, when news of the enterprise reached the Confederates, and a small force of cavalry was dispatched to fell trees on the narrow river and delay progress until adequate numbers could be assembled, Porter had not the support necessary to protect his force against sharpshooters and to remove obstructions.

Retreat was imperative. The river was so narrow that he could not turn the boats, but he had them unship their rudders and back their way out. Meanwhile planters had employed their negroes to fell trees behind them, so that for the Union forces to retrace their course, clearing away the increasing obstructions, was slow and painful work. The enemy were now constantly increasing in numbers and closing in, using sharpshooters in a most annoying fashion. It looked to Porter as if he were trapped, and he thought of the unpleasant possibility of blowing up his gunboats to prevent their falling into the enemy's hands.

At length Colonel Giles A. Smith with eight hundred Federal troops marched forward to the rescue; but danger was not yet past, for the Confederates, increasing their force and enveloping the slowly moving gunboats, now threatened to capture both the army and the navy. They might have done so but for the determination and exhaustless energy of Porter and the timely relief brought forward by Sherman, the latter marching on foot with two or three thousand men. He thus describes meeting Porter, as with

his men he suddenly swept across a cotton field into full view:

> I soon found Admiral Porter, who was on the deck of one of his ironclads, with a shield made of the section of a smoke-stack, and I doubt if he was ever more glad to meet a friend than he was to see me. He explained that he had almost reached the Rolling Fork when the woods became full of sharpshooters, who, taking advantage of trees, stumps, and the levee, would shoot down every man that poked his nose outside the protection of their armor; so that he could not handle his clumsy boats in the narrow channel.

This expedition had occupied from the 15th to the 25th of March, 1863, and was such a nerve-racking performance that any ordinary commander would have felt the need of at least a temporary relief from duty after it. Yet only four days after his return, when Grant wrote proposing the next move against Vicksburg, again requiring hazardous service of the navy, Porter immediately assented. It was nearly April, and as yet not a single real gain had been made. Grant now planned to march his army south along the western bank—an operation made possible for the reason that the swamps were partially dried—and then, ferrying it across below Vicksburg, to move against the Confederate defenses from the south. For this purpose he needed gunboats and transports.

Porter immediately assented and, dividing his squadron, prepared seven ironclads for the purpose. On the night of 16 April, leading the column in the *Benton*, he steamed down the river toward Vicksburg. The gunboats were not discovered until they were opposite the upper batteries, when Confederate picket boats gave the alarm. At once houses on the opposite shore,

fired by the pickets, illuminated the scene and made the gunboats a perfect mark as they ran the gantlet. As the first vessels reached a sharp bend in the river an eddy caught them and whirled them about in a circle right under the enemy's heavy guns. This may have somewhat disturbed the gunners' aim, but it also broke up Porter's column, confusing the helmsmen and causing great danger of running aground.

The *Benton* and the other ironclads attempted to protect themselves by maintaining a heavy fire, but the advantage was naturally with the land forces. Early in the engagement a shot penetrated the casemate of the *Benton* and tore about inside. Another opened up a hole six feet wide in her plating. A third tore open the planking, and other missiles worked similar havoc; but none disabled her machinery or guns, and though she passed within forty yards of the Vicksburg shore she went through to safety below. The ironclads that followed had like experiences. However, one of the three army transports accompanying them, loaded with supplies, was set on fire and burned, and a coal barge was sunk. When they had reached a point twenty or twenty-five miles below Vicksburg, they found their friends of the army anxiously awaiting them.

Six days later the attempt was made to bring down past the batteries more army transports without troops, and only one out of six was lost. Grant's plans were progressing rapidly; nevertheless he moved cautiously, for the Confederates had a larger number of troops in Vicksburg and the vicinity, where the railroads enabled them to move rapidly, than he had at this time in his total force. Even if the enemy did not dispute his crossing, there was a strong fortification on the

height at Grand Gulf, about twenty-five miles by direct line southwest of Vicksburg; and this must be taken, or Grant would leave an enemy on his flank or rear. About the last of April, or two weeks after the ironclads had run past Vicksburg, Porter, in obedience to the wish of Grant, tried to take this fort by a purely naval attack. He had no false optimism as to the outcome; but for four or five hours the ironclads hung doggedly on, firing their heaviest volleys and receiving much more damage than they inflicted.

Meanwhile the Federal forces elsewhere were moving in such a strange manner that Pemberton, the Confederate commander at Vicksburg, was misled and did not guess Grant's real intent. A Union cavalry contingent under Grierson made a raid from Tennessee through Mississippi and, though numbering only seventeen hundred, ripped up railroads and destroyed military equipment with such energy as to give the impression of a very much greater force. Also Sherman, with ten gunboats and several scantily manned army transports, proceeded cautiously up the Yazoo toward Haynes's Bluff and, as the gunboats bombarded the batteries, landed a few regiments. In the evening he embarked them again, and repeated the operation on the following day. Pemberton, coming to the conclusion that Grant's operations to the south below Vicksburg were only a feint and that the real attack was to be from the north, hurriedly ordered the return of troops he had sent to Grand Gulf.

Nothing could have been more favorable for Grant. On the 30th of April he embarked his forces, and Porter took them safely across and down the river to a landing where there were good roads. By sunset that evening Grant had twenty thousand men on the east bank, in a

favorable position to begin on the morrow the march toward the rear of Vicksburg. Soon he was joined by Sherman and had his army united. He was operating against a strong enemy; but he defeated the hostile forces in detail and succeeded in enveloping Vicksburg, shutting up Pemberton in the city and holding off Johnston, who was endeavoring to come to the rescue from the east.

It was two months before Vicksburg was to fall. Meanwhile Porter was constantly active: at one time running down the Red River and shutting off supplies from that quarter; at another time leaving his division below Vicksburg and proceeding by land to the gunboats above. Here a little later he was able to make connections with Sherman, as, in the enveloping movement, the right flank of Grant's army pushed through to the Yazoo. For weeks the Federal Army had been living off the country. Now it was the navy's duty to reëstablish communications and to forward supplies and additional troops. All kinds of duty devolved upon Porter. First, Grant wished to try the effect of a general attack; and the navy as well as the army engaged in this, though without material effect. Sherman wanted a gunboat to silence a certain battery which he thought had been left without support by the withdrawal of heavy guns above; Porter sent the *Cincinnati*, and thereby lost one of his strongest units. Later, as the siege progressed, Grant needed more siege guns; and Porter mounted three batteries of naval guns in the army lines, supplying also naval crews to operate them. Moreover, Porter was constantly patrolling the Mississippi to prevent troops and supplies from reaching the besieged city from the west. During the two months of investment he was doing on the water side what Grant and his generals were doing on the land side.

On 4 July, 1863, Pemberton surrendered unconditionally, and Vicksburg was taken. A week later Port Hudson fell, and the Mississippi was opened to the Gulf. The Confederacy had been split in two.

Nothing shows so well that the army and navy had been working harmoniously together as the official reports of the two commanding officers. Porter wrote:

> The conception of the idea originated solely with General Grant, who adopted a course in which great labor was performed, great battles were fought, and great risks were run.

Grant commented not less emphatically on Porter's service:

> The navy under Porter was all it could be during the entire campaign. Without its assistance the campaign could not have been successfully made with twice the number of men engaged. It could not have been made at all in the way it was, with any number of men, without such assistance.

Coming at exactly the same time, the two great Union successes, Vicksburg in the west and Gettysburg in the east, marked the turning point of the war. Still there was the possibility of a long-protracted and indecisive conflict. The general who was to save the situation was Grant. Strangely enough, in the early stages of the Vicksburg campaign Grant had been held in marked disfavor by many in Washington, who urged that he be relieved. When, however, Pemberton had surrendered and with him thirty thousand troops (the greatest number taken by either side at any one time during the war), doubt vanished. Thus an important part of Porter's service was the saving of Grant for still greater achievement. What Porter had done was publicly recognized by action of Congress, who gave him a vote of thanks. The following month he was

promoted from commander to rear admiral, being placed sixth on the list of the highest grade then existing in the navy. Furthermore, the Department, taking into consideration the exhausting and continuous service which he had been performing for nine months, in a country where malaria abounded, wrote offering him an extended leave of absence. His answer was most characteristic:

> While there is a prospect of anything to be done I do not desire to leave my post. I have still a great deal to do to regulate the different stations, and if the Department will permit me, will take some more favorable opportunity to avail myself of the leave.

Nor is the narrative complete without recounting some events farther south in which also Porter had had part. Five months before the fall of Vicksburg he had considered the shutting off of supplies from Red River. Red River was included not in his command but in Farragut's. However, since Farragut was at this time on the Mississippi at a point below where the Red River empties into it, held there by the heavy batteries of Port Hudson, he was powerless. Therefore Porter sent one of his ironclads, the *Queen of the West*, past Vicksburg to make a raid up the Red River and, surprising the enemy, to take everything in sight. The Confederates had secreted there one ram gunboat, the *Webb*, and some supply steamers, supported by several batteries. The *Queen of the West* at first was successful, and various small craft were her prey, though the Confederate ram escaped capture by flight. But then came reverses, and, going aground under enemy batteries, she in turn was taken. Before news was received of this disaster Porter had sent down also the *Indianola*,

one of his strongest ironclads. Her commanding officer showed bad judgment in handling her, and on being outmaneuvered in a joint attack by the *Webb* and the *Queen of the West* he was obliged to surrender.

These reverses were mortifying to Porter, and the situation had something of seriousness if he was going to keep control of the river below Vicksburg, as was necessary to assist Grant. Just then a gigantic hoax which he had been preparing proved to be of material assistance. Porter, even at sternest moments, loved a joke, and the advantage gained at this time did not lessen his keen delight in deluding his adversaries.

Wishing to ascertain the position and strength of the Confederate batteries at Vicksburg, he had built a dummy monitor to draw their fire. It was a raft of logs three hundred feet long with sides built up to suggest a ship's rail. In the center was a log hut resembling a casemate, with huge wooden guns protruding. Forward and aft of the casemate were terrifying turrets made up of canvas stretched on frames. Large smokestacks in the center were devised by fastening pork barrels one on top of another, in which pots filled with tar and oakum to make smoke were concealed.

When all was ready the monster was towed at midnight down the Mississippi to Vicksburg, the tar furnaces were lighted, and she was set adrift.

Soon all the guns of Vicksburg were blazing away at her, but in haughty silence she pursued her way, not deigning an answer. Undoubtedly she was struck repeatedly; but such was her resistive power that she kept on as before, and the pork barrels remained in place. Below Vicksburg she was caught by an eddy and went ashore on the west bank. This was shortly before sunrise. The Union troops with great labor

pushed her off, and down the river she went. It happened that a working party of Confederates below were hurrying repairs on the injured *Indianola*, their latest prize, which had been run to the bank to avoid sinking. When telegraphic news from Vicksburg announced the approaching monster, the *Queen of the West* and the *Webb* fled to safety without risking an engagement. The crew of the *Indianola*, feeling that they had been ignominiously deserted and realizing their inability to contend with such a foe, decided that if they could not float their craft they must promptly abandon her. The dummy, by good chance, had grounded again, this time only two and a half miles above the former Union vessel. The wretched crew looked apprehensively all the afternoon for the monitor to appear; that night their lieutenant decided to take no chances, and throwing overboard some guns, he destroyed the others, blew up part of the casemate, and sank the wreck in shoal water. Even four days later Colonel Wirt Adams, commanding the Confederate cavalry in the vicinity, had not discovered the ruse, and in his report gave it as his opinion that the Confederates should have hazarded a battle: "With the assistance of our two vessels, the *Queen of the West* and *Webb*, there is scarcely a doubt that we could have saved the *Indianola* and possibly have captured the other gunboat of the enemy."

While operations against Vicksburg were in progress, but two months before it was taken, an appeal had come from both General Banks and Admiral Farragut for two or more gunboats to assist Banks in an expedition planned against Alexandria, the important city and transportation center on the Red River. Four days after Porter had transported Grant's army to the

eastern bank to begin the final campaign against Vicksburg, he discovered that in the next week there was nothing further for him to do; accordingly he took four gunboats and hurried two hundred miles to the mouth of Red River. There he met Farragut, who was making a reconnaissance, and received from him an addition to his force, with which he pushed on up the Red River. So rapid were his movements that he got to Alexandria and took possession of it a few hours before Banks's arrival. Then, with equal dispatch, he turned the city over to Banks and, leaving part of his boats to coöperate and patrol the river, returned to his own especial duty looking toward the reduction of Vicksburg.

The following winter (1863–1864) plans were formulated for a combined military and naval movement against Shreveport and the various depots of supplies which the Confederates were receiving from the Red River country and northwestern Louisiana. About the middle of March, 1864, the expedition set out, Banks commanding the army and Porter the gunboats.

Porter experienced difficulty and delay at Alexandria in getting his larger ironclad gunboats above the falls. Had he been cautious he would have declined to go farther, for here was a hint of the dangers before them. But, eager as ever to do his part, he was intent only on victory. When the combined forces had gone the larger part of the way and were almost within striking distance of Shreveport, Banks's progress was temporarily checked by a considerable force of Confederates under Kirby Smith. Although in a later engagement Kirby Smith was badly worsted, the first reverse had been sufficient for Banks, and he began his retreat.

The gunboats were now in a precarious situation, and every day that followed made this more apparent.

Banks was retreating without reference to their difficulties or safety. The river was low, and many stretches which they had traversed the month before without trouble presented formidable obstacles on their return. Moreover, they were now in the center of an enemy country; not only did sharpshooters constantly annoy them, but batteries had been erected at various points to greet them in case of misadventure. Thus it happened that when one of the transports, becoming disabled, ran to the bank to make repairs, and two ironclads at about the same place got aground, the cavalry leader, General Thomas Green, with two thousand soldiers suddenly appeared and made a spirited attack. The gunboats that were under control fired grape and canister, and the transports used such guns as they had. The fight lasted an hour and a half, the Confederates not giving up the attack until they had lost a fifth of their number, their leader being among the killed.

A serious mishap occurred when the *Eastport*, one of the strongest of Porter's gunboats, ran on a torpedo in the shallow water. She could not sink very far; so Porter sped one hundred and fifty miles down to Alexandria in his flagship, the tiny tinclad *Cricket*, in order to bring back two steam-pump boats. They succeeded in floating the *Eastport*, and on the first day took her twenty miles. But she was constantly grounding and, with the shores lined with enemies, getting her off was painful work. This continued for sixty miles; an equal distance more would have brought her within Union lines. The Federal officers were congratulating themselves that the worst obstacles were past when she went aground in a perfect network of logs with next to no water under her. When Confederates were seen approaching, the order was given to blow her up.

Twenty miles below this place the little *Cricket* with the other tinclads received a terrific bombardment from a battery erected on the shore, supplemented by a perfect hail of musket fire. Nearly all the vessel's guns were quickly rendered useless and half her crew were killed. In the middle of the action Porter found that the *Cricket* had stopped. Going to the engine room he discovered that the engineer had been killed, his hand on the throttle, and his two assistants wounded. Porter himself opened the throttle, and the engine, which was not disabled, carried through to safety those who were living.

When the force reached Alexandria, "Red River had run out," as Porter described the situation, leaving the vessels above the falls with little chance of getting over them until there should be a rise in the river. This was the time of year for high water, and in no May for eighteen years had the river been so low. There was but four feet of water, and the boats required seven or eight feet. A large part of the Mississippi Squadron was in jeopardy, and yet Banks was planning in a short time to march on.

In his desperation Porter was open to any plan that gave a ray of hope, and he listened carefully to a young engineer from Wisconsin, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Bailey, who proposed that they build a dam at the bottom of the rapids, leaving but a small opening through which, as the river rose, they should float the boats on the escaping flood.

Many officers ridiculed the idea, and Porter's early comment was, "If damning would do any good, we would soon have the ships afloat." Though not overconfident, he determined to give it a trial since he knew of nothing better. The gunboats must be saved.

It was an engineering problem, and the army turned to in a wonderful way as they worked it out. A Maine regiment made up largely of lumbermen began felling trees. Other select details from Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa also showed their aptitude. The river was seven hundred and fifty feet wide; but from the two banks were run the two wings of the dam, made up of trees, stone, parts of buildings, and everything that was at hand, leaving only a sluiceway twenty feet wide through which the rising current passed. Part of their work was swept away and they had to change the original plan in some details; but within less than two weeks all the vessels had been saved by this means. The following is Porter's own account of how the first of the ironclads, the *Lexington*, went through:

> She then steered directly for the opening in the dam, through which the water was rushing so furiously that it seemed as if nothing but destruction awaited her.... She entered the gap with a full head of steam on, pitched down the roaring torrent, made two or three spasmodic rolls, hung for a moment on the rocks below, was then swept into deep water by the current, and rounded to safely into the bank. Thirty thousand voices rose in one deafening cheer, and universal joy seemed to pervade the face of every man present.

The Red River expedition was a failure, but not because the Mississippi Squadron had left anything undone that could have been done. An evidence of this was shown when, during the latter part of this year (1864), the government decided on a large joint army and navy expedition against Fort Fisher and Wilmington, North Carolina. The command of the naval contingent was offered to Farragut, but he asked to be excused because of ill health; whereupon Porter was the immediate choice.

Porter discussed the plans with Grant and was keenly disappointed when he discovered that it was not to be Grant but Butler (for whom he had no liking) who was to be associated with him in the enterprise.

Fort Fisher was a strong work; and because the Confederates knew that soon it would be made the object of attack, they had employed their best engineering skill in strengthening its defenses. Supplies for Lee's army in and about Richmond came through this port, and it was vital to the Confederacy that it should be held. The Union cause demanded just as positively that it should be taken. To accomplish this Porter was given sixty vessels, five of them ironclad, the largest force up to this time ever assembled under the American flag. Butler had sixty-five hundred troops.

Butler was slow in arriving; and Porter, who never was given to restraint in speech, voiced his irritation over the delay. He gave the fort a heavy bombardment; and later, when he had assisted in landing the troops and had followed this with a second bombardment, he declared that the fort could be taken by a determined attack of the troops. But Butler thought differently and, to Porter's surprise, soon began reëmbarking his troops. Butler then announced that the place could not be taken by assault and withdrew his troops to Hampton Roads.

Porter, however, would not give up, and wrote to Grant in no uncertain language as to the cause of the failure. It was Porter's anger and tenacity, supported by Grant's calmer but not less positive resolution, that won. Within less than a week there came a letter from Grant asking Porter "to hold on where you are for a few days" and promising an increased military force commanded by Major General Terry to coöperate with him.

The troops were sent with the greatest dispatch, and almost immediately Porter proceeded to the attack. He had divided his huge fleet into four lines, and to each he assigned very definite sections of the enemy's position. Thus on the morning of the first day (13 January, 1865), line No. One shelled the woods to the north of the land face of the fort to clear the way for Terry's troops. Shortly afterwards the reserve line, No. Four, began landing-operations and by afternoon had six thousand troops safely disembarked on the beach. Meanwhile lines One, Two, and Three were bombarding the designated parts of the land and sea faces of the fort, firing with deliberation during the day and through the night and making the guns of the fort their target. All through the following day and intermittently through the night the bombardment continued, and it was resumed again with great intensity at eleven o'clock on the morning of the third day. That afternoon at three o'clock, on the sounding of the blasts of whistles from fifty ships, the fire suddenly ceased. Sixteen hundred bluejackets armed with revolvers and cutlasses, and four hundred marines with muskets, came across the sand dunes on the double; this was in obedience to Porter's order "to board the fort on the run in a seamanlike way."

While they were attempting thus to occupy the east, or sea face, the army was advancing on the west, or land face.

Porter had thought that the Confederates would be so much engaged with the major attack of the troops that the sea forces might enter practically unobserved; but just the opposite happened. The garrison concentrated on the sailors, delivering such a withering fire that over three hundred were killed or wounded; the

remainder broke and fled. Too late the defenders realized that this was but a small part of the attack. Already three national flags had been planted on their parapets to the west, and the rest of the battle was but a flanking movement in which the Confederates lost traverse after traverse. By nine o'clock that evening the fort was in the possession of the Union forces.

After the surrender of Fort Fisher, Porter indulged his sense of humor by sending a lieutenant to establish decoy signals and range lights, thinking he might have a visit from some of the blockade runners before news of the Confederate reverse had reached them. Here is Porter's own story of what followed:

> On the night of the 19th of January two long, light-colored objects were seen moving up Cape Fear River, and in a few moments came to anchor near the flagship. These were the *Stag* and *Charlotte*, two blockade-running steamers, and they had hardly got their anchors down before our boats boarded them and summoned them to surrender.
>
> The officers and passengers of the *Charlotte* were just sitting down to an elegant supper, in honor of their safe arrival, when the boarding officer walked into the cabin and announced to the astonished company that they were prisoners.

The fall of Fort Fisher opened the way to Wilmington, which was taken a few weeks later. Scharf, the Confederate historian, remarks:

> The fall of Wilmington was the severest blow to the Confederate cause which it could receive from the loss of any port.... With Wilmington open, the supplies that reached the Confederate armies would have enabled them to maintain an unequal contest for years; but with the fall of Fort Fisher the constant stream of supplies was cut off.

Porter continued to have important billets assigned him to the very close of the war. Just before Appomattox he was in charge of naval operations up the James River, and thus, when President Lincoln left Washington by steamer and spent two weeks in and about the James River, near to Grant's last battle front, the admiral was almost constantly with the President. During the latter part of the time the President occupied a cabin on Porter's flagship. There was a warm personal friendship between the two, and the assassination of Lincoln, immediately on his return to Washington, brought the greatest distress to Porter.

On the termination of hostilities Porter was given shore duty of greatest importance, being placed in charge of the Naval Academy. He was superintendent from 1865 to 1869. On him devolved what amounted almost to the rebuilding of the academy. He changed the entire character of the institution by introducing rowing, baseball, and boxing; in short, he organized athletics. Furthermore, he permitted the midshipmen to give amateur theatricals, an idea which only a few years earlier had been sternly frowned upon. His impulsive, generous sympathy, his common sense, his frankness, and his most distinguished war record made him a potent influence. When the vice admiral of the navy, fifty-three years old, was so young and exuberant that he would go to the gymnasium and put on boxing-gloves to battle with midshipman champions, there is need of no further comment.

It is not surprising that juniors liked to serve under Porter. Where he went there was activity and achievement, and no commanding officer was more prompt to recognize and mention in his official reports the meritorious service of his subordinates. Porter was a marvel

of endurance, and few are the leaders of history who could have gone through all he underwent for four years, most of it on the Mississippi, without quickly wearing out. His strength was in part due to his buoyant temperament and his optimism. Even in desperate situations he never lost the opportunity of indulging in a jest; he knew things were going to turn out all right, and somehow in the end they did turn out right. He had remarkable quickness in thought as well as in execution. He saw a plan at a glance, grasping at once the essential ideas. And when he began moving, all with him felt his energizing influence. If the American who followed a generation later had preceded him, the nation would have said, "Porter was a naval Roosevelt."

CHAPTER X

STEPHEN BLEECKER LUCE (1827–1917)

FEW OFFICERS have been so intimately connected with the education of officers and enlisted men as Stephen B. Luce, and none has left a deeper impression or accomplished more momentous results. Nor was this owing to favorable circumstances, but rather to the sheer force of personality. His long career on the active list, embracing a period of forty-eight years, had but reached its middle point at the close of the Civil War; during the last half he was to see the navy decline from a position of high supremacy to one of marked insignificance. Against this decline he exerted all his strength; though the ships were becoming hopelessly antiquated, the personnel must be saved from inaction and discouragement. Under his guidance there was a quickening into new life. Even the dull routine that attended the annual inspection of an old-time sailing ship he transformed into a game so exciting that the young officers remembered it all their days. He introduced modern strategy and tactics. As Rear Admiral Fiske has well summed it up, "Luce taught the navy to think."

Luce began his naval career in 1841, when, at the age of fourteen, he was appointed midshipman and ordered to report on the receiving ship at New York. Four years later, when attached to the *Columbus*, he accompanied the first expedition to Japan. The American commis-

sioner to China, having negotiated a treaty between the United States and China, in his enthusiasm had written to the President suggesting that the same might be done with Japan.

In response Commodore James Biddle was sent out in 1845 with the *Columbus*, eighty guns, and the *Vincennes*, twenty guns, under the following cautious orders: "You will take the utmost care to ascertain if the ports of Japan are accessible, . . . yet not in such a manner as to excite a hostile feeling or a distrust of the government of the United States."

Biddle took his force direct to the Bay of Yedo, where he would be not far from the capital Yedo. Before his ships had come to anchor, a cordon of armed boats surrounded the ships, and a Japanese officer with a Dutch interpreter came on board to inquire into the object of their visit. The Japanese showed great courtesy but, though offering supplies, prohibited any landing or communication with the shore. Meanwhile they referred Biddle's message to Yedo. In seven days came the answer. According to Japanese law there was to be no trade except with the Chinese and Dutch. "Concerning strange lands, all things are fixed at Nagasaki, not here in the bay; therefore you must depart as quickly as possible and not come any more to Japan."

While Luce had been absent in the Far East the Naval Academy was founded, and when on his return he was detached, he was ordered to the "Naval School," as it was then called, to take the senior course. From its founding in 1845 until 1851 the academy was largely influenced by the schools at the navy yards which it had supplanted; though there was a class popularly known as "youngsters," who reported for a year's course immediately after appointment, the chief work

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was with the "oldsters," midshipmen who had been at sea for several years and required instruction in order to pass examinations for promotion. Interesting, since it suggests something of the size and character of the institution, is the superintendent's letter of 12 October, 1848, informing the Department of the reopening of the Naval School on that day:

> Twenty-six midshipmen of the date of 1841 and one of 1846 have reported for duty. Seventeen applicants for admission have also been reported, of whom three have been withdrawn and placed under instruction at St. John's College in this place.

Luce was one of the twenty-six first mentioned. He had originally reported on 1 April, but had been absent on leave during the summer. All together he had a full year of study, supposedly covering algebra, geometry, trigonometry, navigation, astronomy (descriptive and nautical), mechanics, optics, magnetism, electricity, ordnance, gunnery, steam, history, French or Spanish, and English composition. As a matter of fact the examination for which the oldsters were preparing was limited almost entirely to seamanship and navigation; this being known, the elaborate curriculum was commonly not followed with all the thoroughness that might have been desired.

The superintendent of the Naval Academy during this year was Commander G. P. Upshur, much more gentle and amiable than most captains and commanders of his time and, as his numerous letters to the Secretary of the Navy revealed, painfully worried by the pranks of his wild midshipmen. In May, 1848 (a month after Luce's reporting), the offense over which Upshur poured out his soul as he wrote to the Secretary was dueling. The fight took place near the battery within

the walls of the "School Yard," and one of the principals was severely wounded; a probe to the depth of six inches had failed to locate the ball. "This violation of all law, civil, martial, and moral," observed the superintendent, "was committed within the walls of an institution under naval government, and within a few hundred yards of the office and residence of its commanding officer, a fact which, I think, greatly aggravates the offense."

A month later his tale of woe dealt with another duel, this one being fought at Bladensburg, just outside of Washington. In the January following his letters dwelt on two cases of midshipmen who, taking advantage of the long Christmas leave, had drunk so heavily as to be suffering from a severe attack of delirium tremens. As Park Benjamin remarks of the Naval Academy in the forties, it "was not a military institution at all." Discipline was lax, midshipmen did not regularly wear uniforms, and there were no formations or cadet officers. At the outset it was simply a place that afforded facilities to cram for examinations.

In the superintendent's letter book the only times Luce's name appeared were when he reported and when he was detached. He evidently did not rise to fame through escapades.

The first year of the Civil War found Luce a lieutenant in charge of a gun division on the steam frigate *Wabash*, the flagship of Captain Du Pont in the battle of Port Royal, the best naval engagement of 1861. At the entrance to the deep inlet at this point (twenty-two miles from Savannah) the Confederates had erected two forts; and to crush them the government had fitted out an imposing expedition of fifty ships, including the transports, with thirteen thousand troops. The odds

were heavily in favor of the Union fleet, because it struck early before the land works were fully completed. Du Pont's force had been scattered by a storm on the way south, and the means for disembarking the troops having been lost, they were not ready to coöperate; but Du Pont, realizing that each day of delay would enable the Confederates to strengthen their resistance, proceeded to attack the forts with the ships even before some of his number had arrived.

Dividing his fleet into two squadrons, he took the main squadron, consisting of the nine heaviest ships, led by the *Wabash*, between the forts and into Port Royal Sound; the lighter vessels, designated as the "flanking squadron," accompanied them to the farthest point within the sound and then remained behind to prevent the Confederate gunboat flotilla, which issued from a hiding place in one of the creeks, from delivering an attack as the main squadron turned. Du Pont's plan was to bombard the forts as he slowly steamed past and then, making an ellipse, to return again to the attack. The ships had laid their course near to Fort Walker on the southwest, and, well-nigh smothering by their rapid fire the men who were serving the guns with scant or no protection, in short time had silenced all the pieces. It remained to take possession of the works and then proceed to do the same to Fort Beauregard on the northeast.

The Union losses were slight, but that was because of the strength of the fire delivered by their guns. Luce was in the thick of the fighting and was mentioned with commendation in the report of the commanding officer of the *Wabash*:

> The three gun-deck divisions of 9-inch guns, under Lieutenants Upshur, Luce, and Barnes, were commanded by

those officers in a manner which illustrated the highest power, both of men and guns, and exhibited the greatest effect of manhood and training. I beg leave to commend these officers in terms of the warmest praise, both for skill and conduct. . . .

During more than three fourths of the war Luce was at sea, and for the larger part of this duty he was on this section of the coast, within easy distance of both Savannah and Charleston. Quickly acquiring an accurate knowledge of the waters, he was active in various reconnoitering expeditions. Later, following his promotion to lieutenant commander, he commanded the ironclad *Nantucket* and the *Pontiac*. With these he joined in the blockade of Charleston and Savannah, where there was an occasional flash of excitement when a blockade runner attempted to slip past.

Excellent as was Luce's war service, still more important were the three tours of duty he had at the Naval Academy during the sixties. No other officer saw that institution from so many angles during his life as did Luce. This will be seen from the following:

1848–1849: midshipman student.

1860–1861: assistant to the commandant and instructor in gunnery.

1862–1863: head of Department of Seamanship.

1865–1868: commandant of midshipmen.

1873: member of Board of Examiners.

1901: member of Board of Visitors.

During the summer of 1862 the midshipmen's practice cruise was called upon for double duty. The sloop of war *Marion*, of which Luce was in command, carrying half the midshipmen, was, with the *John Adams*, not only to afford the customary drills to the midshipmen but to patrol the North Atlantic waters, stopping to

examine every ship that might in the least suggest a Confederate privateer. The midshipmen took great delight in firing blank cartridges or an occasional shot across a ship's bow, but they made no captures. In the summer of 1863 Luce, on his patrol on the sloop of war *Macedonian*, sailed to England. In Plymouth he was at once notified by the American minister, who was alarmed for the safety of the midshipmen, of a report that a Confederate cruiser was in the vicinity. Luce realized that his old sailing ship was not a match for a fast steam cruiser; nevertheless he viewed the situation not at all as did the representative of the State Department. Sailing at the first opportunity, he disguised the *Macedonian* by lowering her lofty masts, painting her spars a bright yellow as well as giving her a black hull by eliminating the characteristic broad white stripe on the hull, and finally flying a Spanish flag. He loaded all his guns and, placing sandbags in the muzzles to conceal the absence of tampions, he proceeded to the Bay of Biscay, hoping to lure the unsuspecting *Florida* or *Alabama* under his guns. He thought to disable his enemy by a heavy broadside, and had thorough confidence that his young, enthusiastic crew of midshipmen would carry the day; but the practice ship was spared the supreme test of battle.

From his early tours of duty at the Naval Academy as well as at sea Luce had seen the need of a proper textbook on seamanship. Since the forties midshipmen and officers had used Brady's "Kedge-Anchor," but as this was inadequate every intelligent sea dog felt it necessary to supplement it by elaborate notes. No sooner had Luce returned to the Naval Academy for duty in 1862 than he began the much-needed work. The result did not satisfy him; but before the midship-

men left on the summer cruise they had a book published in two parts, entitled, "Seamanship: Compiled from Various Authorities for the Use of the United States Naval Academy, Newport, R. I." In the preface Luce commented on its imperfections, owing to haste, and with characteristic modesty he omitted his name from the title-page. Later editions he perfected and enlarged, and he thus gave what for a generation and more was the recognized textbook in its field throughout the navy.

It came to be implicitly followed, saving old and young alike many an awkward blunder. In his history of the Naval Academy Benjamin tells of a midshipman who in his blind confidence went a little too far. He was sailing on a sloop of war and, knowing that he should be on duty as a deck officer, was worried over the possibility of being required to tack ship. However, tearing out the pages in the book that described the operations, he felt he was ready for such an emergency.

> Sure enough it came, and boldly he thundered forth his commands, squinting sideways, meanwhile, at the pages concealed in his cloak. The ship with her helm down came well up into the wind.
>
> "Main topsail haul!" he roared, and the after yards flew round.
>
> The next order would bring over the head yards on the new tack and his troubles would be ended. He turned the page, got the wrong one, glanced down, read what he saw instinctively, and to the astonishment of the crew and the fury of his captain shouted, "Let go the starboard anchor!"

Easy-going officers and lazy midshipmen were not overfond of Luce, for there was always something to be done when he was on duty. Not content with doing work required by ship or station routine, in the spirit

of a game he invented emergencies and called upon junior officers or midshipmen to take charge and save the day. Thus, Rear Admiral F. H. Delano of the class of '67 has related to the author that on a practice cruise their ship ran aground. The consternation of those not in the secret was increased by Luce's turning over to the midshipmen the entire responsibility of getting her off. To them the emergency was a very real one, and they may not have shared the commandant's absence of worry; for he knew the character of the soft mud bank that held her and, further, had made sure that the accident should happen during low tide, when a few hours would be sure to release them.

Another of the tasks he imposed was the dismounting of one of the large guns and taking it ashore—a piece of work that required some practical engineering.

The same rear admiral also relates a story showing Luce's handling of discipline in quarters.

Turner was a little fellow, and because he was mischievous he frequently got into trouble. One of the offenses for which he was reported was "Late at formation."

The regulations required that for every report the midshipman must put in a statement. Turner, who always had some excuse, explained that he "hurried but was a little bit lame."

Luce called the midshipman to his office, but instead of making it a grave matter, as some of his younger assistants might have done, dismissed it with, "If you should have any such serious trouble again, I'll send a man with a wheelbarrow for you."

A few days later there was another report made against Turner for the same offense. This time his statement read, "The man with the wheelbarrow who was to have assisted me failed to appear."

Luce probably assigned demerits, but instead of being angry he laughed over Turner's statement.

Admiral Porter was superintendent of the Naval Academy while Commander Luce was commandant of midshipmen. The former heartily approved of sports, and it is not strange that with the encouragement of two such officers modern organized athletics had their beginning at the academy. Benjamin mentions rival baseball clubs formed in the different classes: the "Nautical" of '67, the "Severn" of '68, the "Monitor" of '69, and the "Santee" of '70. Forthwith the drill ground was the scene of hard-fought battles occurring on Saturday afternoons; and some rowing-shells having been secured, the first crews were organized. Further, old Fort Severn was transformed into a gymnasium, weekly hops were held, and before the year was over the first ancestor of the present midshipmen's "Masqueraders" had appeared and had produced two shows. As Benjamin observes, this was a decided change for midshipmen, certain of whom had been disciplined only a year before by a former superintendent when they asked permission to play cricket in Touro Park, Newport, an open square upon which their quarters looked.

Luce was unusually successful with midshipmen and enlisted men because of his warm sympathy and unfailing humor. The following incidents show something of his happy relations.

When Luce was a captain, Rear Admiral Archibald H. Scales relates, there was great freedom or carelessness throughout the service in the matter of uniform, and thus it happened that Luce, who had been off on a jaunt in the country and was in somewhat nonregulation dress, overtook one of his young ensigns who was out of uniform. Luce intended at least to get the

advantage of initiative and at once remarked, "Young man, you're out of uniform."

The ensign, seeing that the captain had a twinkle in his eye, attempted to give him as good as he had received: "I beg your pardon, captain. I thought I had on the same uniform as you, sir."

"Ah, but there 's a difference between us," was the rejoinder. "I have the captain's permission."

The following story is told of one of our younger rear admirals who, on a practice cruise in the eighties, was made aid to Luce, commanding the squadron.

The billet was as new and strange to the midshipman as were most things connected with the navy, and early in the cruise, when the ships came to anchor off Fort Preble, Maine, he inquired what his duties were. Luce, always kindly, referred him to the executive officer, Lieutenant Meigs, who, of course, had charge of all such routine. Meigs, inclined to be a bit stiff, resented the question, answering sarcastically, "Oh, you are here to have a good time, to go ashore and roam about as you please."

The innocent midshipman, not noticing the ridicule, went ashore at the first opportunity and, in his enthusiasm at seeing Portland and New England for the first time, stayed away two days.

On his return he was promptly hauled before Meigs, who sternly inquired into his prolonged absence without leave.

"Oh, sir," answered the midshipman most unaffectedly, "you told me to go ashore as I pleased, and I had a very good time, sir."

This must have reached the ear of Luce. Certainly nothing was done in the punishment of his aid, though Meigs became more explicit in regard to duties. It

happened that the general commanding the army post not only was an officer of unusual personality himself but had a most attractive home. In consequence there sprang up a warm friendship between army and navy; and as the ships were in the vicinity for some time, Luce visited there frequently and on more than one occasion took his aid with him. The aid, a Southerner by birth, at once discovered that the general had three charming young daughters, and though they proved very shy he devoted himself to them with the traditional gallantry of his ancestors. A few days after the aid's visit to Portland, Luce saw him strolling toward the fields with the general's eldest daughter. Calling the young lady to him, Luce, with all seriousness but for a suspicion of a twinkle in his blue-gray eye, gave the warning: "Miss Mary, don't take him where there are any cows. It wouldn't be safe. They'd eat him up."

Fourteen years later the midshipman aid, still persevering in his attentions, succeeded in winning one of the general's daughters. His faith in the training and leading of his admiral proved well founded.

It was not merely during the period of his duty at the Naval Academy, but long after it, as well, that Luce was regarded as the great teacher of seamanship. The fact that he was the author of the recognized textbook on the subject had, of course, considerable weight, but still more significant was the fact that he was such a surpassingly good seaman himself. He knew exactly what could be expected of a ship; often in entering a harbor he would sail under a full spread of canvas and make a flying mooring, or on leaving he would come about so close as almost to graze another ship at anchor, giving thrills to all who looked on. Knowing the ship, he was merely playing the seaman's game, giving ex-

pression to the exuberance of his spirits. Others doing the same would have been guilty of wild recklessness.

What the enlisted men thought of Luce was suggested by what Commodore E. B. Underwood related to the author:

> As sailors were talking at the gangway an officer caught a fragment spoken by William Pepper, an old-time quartermaster: "There are three men who know how to sail a ship—there is me, Stephen B. Lewis [as the quartermaster pronounced the name], and John Lee Davis [later rear admiral]—three of the best seamen the United States has ever produced."

Commodore Underwood years later repeated this to Admiral Luce. The admiral smiled quizzically and remarked: "I remember William Pepper. He was a good seaman."

All, young and old, respect not only the man who can teach but the man who can do. Luce, surpassing in both, raised the tradition of seamanship even higher than ever before.

The seventies and eighties mark the period when the fortunes of the American Navy were at their very lowest ebb. An English writer comments on the sad state of affairs. A service which at the end of the Civil War showed extraordinary strength, with 674 ships (sixty of them ironclads), within a brief fifteen years had declined to the point that when two of the best ships had been sold to France, two to Peru, one burned, and the rest fallen into neglect and decay, it could be said that the United States had not a single efficient battleship. The condition of the navy was not secret, and finally the pleadings of the officers and of the Navy Department prevailed: in 1883 Congress

authorized a building program, beginning with three modern cruisers. In 1891 three battleships, such as could be compared favorably with any of their time, were laid down—the *Indiana,* the *Oregon,* and the *Massachusetts.* They were to be the strength of the navy in the Spanish-American War.

The same years that saw the navy at its lowest ebb were those that witnessed the highest service of Admiral Luce. He had joined with others in the general movement for modern ships. But what are ships without men? The personnel was weak as well as the matériel. Almost single-handed Luce began his great work of raising the standard of efficiency of both officers and enlisted men.

His plan for improving enlisted men looked especially to the period of their first training. This he had opportunity to shape, for from 1877 to 1881 he had command of the training ship *Minnesota* and from 1881 to 1884 command of all apprentice ships. Fortunately at this time and to almost the end of his life Luce used the Service magazine and other periodicals to communicate his ideas, and as he wrote unusually well we have a clear exposition of his theory on the education of the seaman.

The first article of the first number of the *Naval Institute Proceedings,* published in 1874, was contributed by Captain Luce and was entitled "The Manning of Our Navy and Mercantile Marine." In this he sounds the keynote of much of his later work:

> We need for our ships the thorough seaman, with his characteristic devotion to the flag of his country, his contempt for danger, his love of adventure, combined with the carefully trained naval gunner. And, the prejudices of many of our officers to the contrary, we may look to our

seaman of the future for yet higher qualities, but such as are sure to come by that very course of education which is to give us the best type of a modern man-of-warsman.

In later articles he outlined with detail the schooling and training the sailor should have. Generalizing, he remarked that the sailor should be educated to be a "complete creature after his kind." He should have schooling in ordinary branches and also technical instruction. To make the latter concrete Luce added the following warning (the italics are his): "*Our uneducated seamen will stand no chance against the trained gunners of England and France.*"

His plan was to train seamen not only for the navy but also for that most essential naval reserve, the merchant marine; this he felt was necessary at a time when the native American seaman was rapidly disappearing.

In conclusion he urged that Congress should give an allowance for at least a thousand boys over and above the present complement of seamen in the navy, these to be trained for the purpose of becoming seamen and petty officers, and further, that at least three vessels should be commissioned for the carrying out of such an act.

The article bore fruit. About a year later provision was made so that boys might be enlisted and given some of the training Luce had suggested; and in 1881 he very properly was given command of the Training Practice Squadron. Only three of the five ships included in this were "cruising vessels," and they were the honored but ancient sailing craft *Constitution*, *Saratoga*, and *Portsmouth*. But Luce did wonders with them. He made no apology for the obsolete ships, which many officers thought afforded no preparation for duty on steam cruisers. As a matter of fact the

United States had at that time no modern cruisers; but even when they had come into our navy, Luce regarded the handling of a sailing ship at sea in all weathers as the very best training. The broadsword and the rapier are obsolete as weapons, he remarked by way of analogy, yet constant practice with them and with gloves trains a lad into better command of temper and limbs. He thought the hard physical toil and peril connected with the sailing ship stimulated every faculty.

Luce planned that on enlistment the apprentices should at once get to sea, first on station ships, then on cruising ships. He preferred to have the cruise made to foreign ports, both for the increased interest and for the long voyage required. Speaking of the latter he remarked, "We want blue-water sailors."

At the very beginning of their training he had the apprentices given infantry drill with the constant practice of getting into boats as they went ashore for this purpose. On ship they were taught English grammar, arithmetic, and geography. He wanted the apprentice, however, to be absorbing sea atmosphere at once and accordingly he preferred that the station ship should not even be moored to a wharf:

> Thus he [the apprentice] acquires from the very beginning something of the ways of sailors, their mode of expression, habits of thought, manners, customs—the first insight into the technique of his calling. He also learns their stories, their songs, and their traditions.

As would be expected, Luce introduced into the system also the spirit of the game. As he explained:

> Mental stimulus is necessary to complete muscular development. . . . A boy gladly expends in a game of baseball

as much heat and energy as would be required to saw a cord of wood; the latter would disgust him. Men whose sole object is the increase of muscle tissue soon turn with loathing from the treadmill system of the gymnasium; adequate mental stimulus is wanting.

The game was afforded by eager competition. He had the ships cruise singly and then meet for squadron organization with competitive exercises preceding the annual examination. His later plan carried the rivalry farther and provided that the training squadron should act with the North Atlantic Fleet—the whole joining with the War College in a war game that was so vivid as to appeal to the dullest imagination. Enlisted men could grow just as excited as officers in outwitting their opponents and saving New York from attack through Long Island Sound.

Admiral Luce was constantly directing attention to the welfare of the men. One thing to which he gave special thought was mass singing. The ship's band was stimulated by his interest to do its best; and, in addition, he regularly had a singing-master on board ship. The whole had very much of the character of the singing on shipboard and in camp thirty-six years later in the World War. Luce made the singing bright and jolly, yet it was also serious business with him. He believed, as he later wrote: "Lyric poetry is the most ancient and enduring method of instructing the young and of keeping alive the history and traditions of a nation. It is a great moral force." He gathered together the old songs commemorating our naval victories, obtaining the music in many cases only by diligent and repeated search. Thus the apprentices were taught "The *Constitution* and the *Guerrière*," "Paul Jones's Victory," "The Yankee Man of War," etc., "in the hope

that they would serve in no small degree to cultivate in our young sailors not only a love for their vocation as seamen but also that devotion to their flag which distinguished those who laid the foundation of our naval renown." Also they were taught "Nancy Lee," the brightest, sweetest, and most musical song ever sung at sea. The effort to educate them by drilling them in singing right songs was not altogether successful. Luce was terribly disappointed in coming upon groups of men on liberty who were singing cheap stuff from the dance halls, and not "The *Constitution* and the *Guerrière*." But education is a matter of slow growth; and a good plant in the garden is not to be despised, even though a weed, taking root beside it, in a few days has overtopped it.

While Luce was in command of the training squadron his vigorous personality kept every officer and man thoroughly alive. When he was transferred to other duty, he saw this service decline. In 1910 he remarked, probably with a touch of sadness: "The training service culminated in the training squadron of 1883. Notwithstanding years of labor devoted to bringing it to the point of high efficiency, that service has now melted into thin air." Luce held to it that his ideas were sound; and the proof was to follow only a few years later when, as the cloud of the World War grew upon the horizon, prodigious efforts were made to enlarge and improve our personnel, and what was then adopted was very much like the apprentice system which has been described.

Admiral Luce's second notable service to the cause of naval education was the founding of the War College. This is commonly regarded as the great achievement of his life.

In a remarkable paper presented on 4 April, 1883, to the Naval Institute, Newport Branch, Luce pointed out that although the army had the United States Artillery School, established in 1823, followed by two similar schools in other branches, the navy had nothing corresponding. He asserted that the naval officers should possess a knowledge of the science and practice of war.

There were two things he considered quite as important as that we should have strong fighting ships. First, an officer should know how to fight his own ship and to carry several ships into action—that is, know tactics; secondly, having a certain force he should know how to place it so that it would do the greatest good — that is, know strategy. The latter he made clear by suggesting the futility of a fleet decoyed into the pursuit of a hostile force through the West Indies, and, after taking a few prizes, returning to find Key West in the possession of the enemy. In conclusion he urged the establishment of the Naval War College on Coasters Harbor Island, Newport, Rhode Island, where all accessories were ready without the expenditure of a single penny. It was here that the institution was founded in 1885. Of the way in which it was accomplished Admiral C. F. Goodrich has given this record:

> His [Luce's] persistent advocacy of a Naval War College converted the late Rear Admiral John G. Walker, U. S. N., then chief of the Bureau of Navigation, to acceptance and loyal support of Luce's idea. A board was appointed to consider the scheme and to map out a plan for its organization and conduct. Luce was the senior member; Sampson was associated with him, and I brought up the rear as junior and working member. Our report was adopted and the Naval War College, with Luce as its president—the first of its kind in any country in the world—was created.

The idea was not received with favor by most officers. Rear Admiral Delano, who when a lieutenant was a member of the first class, says that his immediate associates "boohooed" it. They had just finished the summer course at the Torpedo Station, Newport; and when they found that instead of having leave they were now scheduled to take a month's course at the War College, they were very unhappy. As they expressed it, they had been "shanghaied" into it. Rear Admiral Fiske, also a lieutenant, says that on being ordered by Luce two years later to attend Mahan's lectures at the College, he did so "with a bad grace," and he remarked on the covert sneers and loud guffaws with which most officers spoke of the new venture; but this feeling was merely the expression of those who had no knowledge of the real character of Luce's inspiration. Thirty years later Admiral Fiske related in "From Midshipman to Rear Admiral" how complete was the change of feeling when progressive officers really understood. Expressing his own intense admiration, akin to reverence, he dedicated the volume just mentioned "To the memory of Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, U. S. Navy, who saw the light before others saw it, and led the navies toward it."

Incidental to the founding of the War College and important in Luce's great contributions to the early success of the project was his discovery of Mahan. Mahan had never written a page on naval strategy and had no knowledge of history; yet Luce, with his keen insight, saw that he was the officer to initiate the work in these branches and so impressed him by the program he outlined that even though Mahan was five thousand miles distant, he drew him to Newport and induced him enthusiastically to begin his study. The result was

"The Influence of Sea Power upon History," originally given as lectures. These lectures were but the first step in a remarkable career that followed, all in consequence of Luce's suggestion.

As for the War College, for years it had its ups and downs; and when, three years after its founding, the Secretary of the Navy frowned upon it and ordered its consolidation with the Torpedo Station at Newport, friends became despondent. In 1893 Secretary of the Navy Herbert visited Newport with the firm idea of making an end to the College; but as he was a man open to conviction, an examination of what it had accomplished compelled him to change his mind, and instead of blotting it out he gave it back its former independence with a new and more commodious building on Coasters Harbor Island.

If Admiral Luce's idea required any further testing to show its practical value, history afforded it during the two wars since the War College was founded. In the Spanish-American War Captain Mahan, former president of the College, was selected as a member of a board of three in strategy and operations; and in the World War Admiral Sims, then president of the College, was given the command of American naval forces operating in European waters.

The war game, as played on the huge map at the War College and, in a more practical way, by making the ships of the fleet go through extensive evolutions and simulate real fighting, is now well known, but it had never been tried in our navy till Luce introduced it. The idea, borrowed from some of the European nations, was developed and adapted by Lieutenant William McCarty Little and made a part of the College curriculum.

When it came to fleet evolutions the government could not place in commission the required number of battleships; then Luce proposed that problems in naval tactics should be worked out by steam launches and had twelve sent to the College for that purpose. It was next discovered that the requisite number of machinists and firemen could not be furnished. But Luce would not give up the plan and at one time considered in all seriousness, he says, placing on the parade ground twelve seamen, each supplied with a wheelbarrow, to go through the evolutions of a fleet. Others might have submitted to the inevitable, but Luce held to his idea, and the War College and the North Atlantic Fleet gained a practical knowledge of tactics.

Previously ships had been operating singly; and when Luce attempted squadron maneuvers it was at first hard to get them into station. Later, ships became so much more skillful that they were able to keep their position in a close column. Luce, commenting on it, remarked, "Why, now whenever I stick my head out of my port, I have to look out for a flying-jib boom."

Admiral Fiske, speaking of the way in which Luce, when commanding the fleet, had the officers going all the time, said that in addition to requiring them to attend lectures he kept them continually steaming out to sea to hold tactical evolutions, then going into port for night exercises, sham attacks, landing parties, and marches. "Luce could never be quiet himself or let anybody else be quiet. We admired him intensely because we realized his extraordinary intelligence, his professional knowledge and skill, and his force of character."

As an example of how Admiral Luce could infuse life even into a perfunctory inspection of ship, the following

was related to the author by Rear Admiral Delano, at the time a lieutenant and the navigating officer of the *Ossipee*.

The ships of the squadron, which had been at various stations, were now assembled and were on their way north from Key West, some of them under sail.

At eleven o'clock there came a signal from the admiral to the *Ossipee*, "When will you be ready for inspection?"

Several of the ships had already been inspected in port. Inspection at sea was uncommon. The executive and navigating officers happened to be on the bridge with the captain, and thinking the proposal was a bluff they persuaded him to reply, "Ready today."

The answer came back, "Will be on board at one o'clock."

Shortly before that time the squadron hove to, and the admiral with his staff (who did not particularly like it) rowed a mile and came aboard.

The men entered into the spirit of the inspection and never did better. After a general examination of the ship, following the admiral's orders they "went to battle."

When things had run rather smoothly for a while, Luce exclaimed: "It is going pretty hard with us. Captain and first lieutenant gone! Who's that young man?" pointing to an ensign. "Send for him. Mr. ——, you're in command. We've had pretty hard luck. Captain, executive officer, navigator, all killed! Wheel shot away! You take charge."

At this point Delano, excited by hearing that their wheel had been smashed by an 11-inch shot, called out, "Lead out your relieving tackles."

Luce interposed: "*You* can't give any orders. You're dead."

When the ensign showed he could carry on, the admiral had him in turn killed, and ordered the gun captains to take charge. It was all highly satisfactory, and the admiral, as much pleased as any of the officers and crew, stayed until six o'clock.

Influenced by the soundness of the principles upon which the Naval War College was founded, the United States Army War College was established in 1901. In England, as J. S. Corbett, professor of history at the Royal Naval War College, writes, their beginning was not made until 1900: "It was simply decided to establish experimentally at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, a 'War Course' for captains and commanders, designed broadly on the lines of the American War College."

Furthermore, the German War College, the Naval War College of Japan, and the French Naval War College were established. As Fiske said, Admiral Luce "led the navies."

A full discussion of the work of Luce would include also his studies on "Naval Administration," for he saw that in time of emergency the civilian Secretary of the Navy had eight bureaus, but nothing to guide him in unifying them as might be demanded in preparing for war or in actual hostilities. The idea was not popular at the time; yet before the World War the General Board, the Secretary's Advisory Council, and the Chief of Naval Operations had been created to meet the very need that Luce had pointed out.

He was regularly retired because of age in 1889, but such an officer and man could not rest in inactivity, and the government could not spare him. Again and again he was given special duty at the War College and elsewhere until 1910, when he had had sixty-nine years of service in the navy and was eighty-three years old.

Luce may be compared with Macdonough in the beauty and strength of his inner life. Religion with him was carefully followed in its external forms; but it meant vastly more than this, for it supplied the motive power, and he did not hesitate to help others by the same strength. When he had no chaplain on board ship he himself conducted divine service, and it was no repetition of empty forms as he read the prayers. Those who knew him best said that he had the simple trusting faith of a child.

Two buildings at the Naval Academy in turn have been named for him, a double honor paid to no other officer. When the building designed for the Department of Seamanship (containing also the gymnasium) was completed, it was given his name, even though at the time Luce was still living; and when, some years later during the World War, the academy was enlarged for the greatly increased number of midshipmen and seamanship was moved to a new home, there was no other name that could be suggested for the new hall, and so the name Luce was transferred with the department.

Stephen Bleecker Luce stands foremost in our navy as the great seaman and teacher of seamanship. He was the educator of both officers and men. He accomplished much by his unique and inspiring personality. In a time of stagnation, when other officers were pessimistic and inclined to accept conditions as they were, Luce set to work to improve them. By his unfailing activity and hopefulness he induced these qualities in others. He had ideals and inspired those about him with his ideals. He prayed, and his prayers were answered. He lived to be ninety years old, and the influence of his life still goes on.

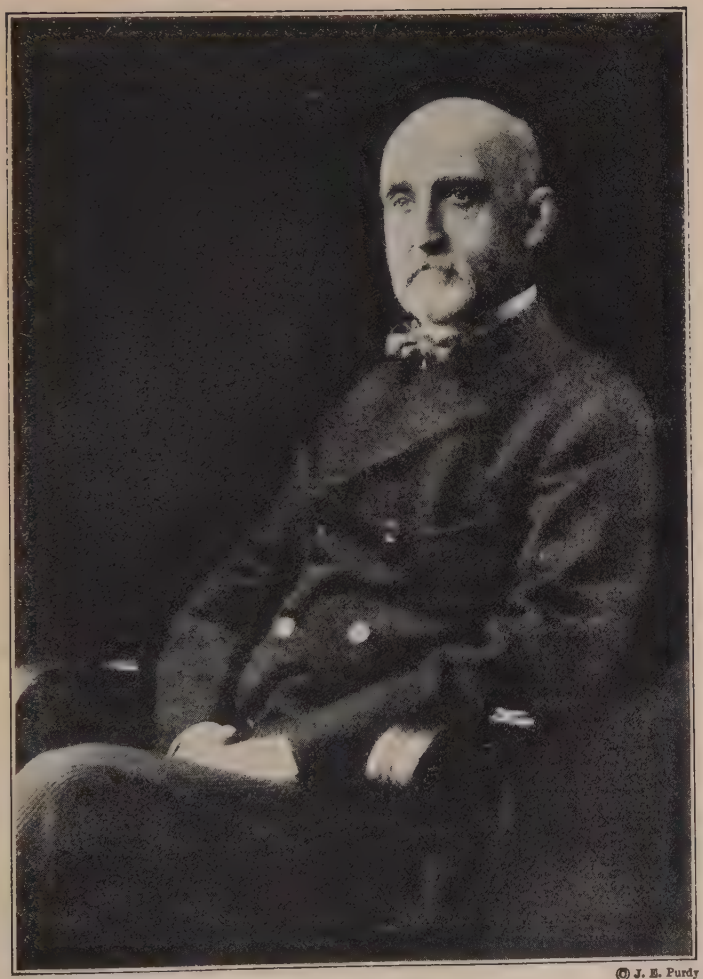
CHAPTER XI

ALFRED THAYER MAHAN (1840–1914)

AS HAS been related, Admiral Luce in founding the War College rendered further service in discovering Mahan. Luce showed no small ability to read character in thus picking out a commander unknown except to his immediate associates and regarded even by them as of rather ordinary powers. Indeed, Mahan himself seems to have been as unsuspecting of his genius and of the distinguished career which lay before him as most of his fellow officers were. Later he characterized himself as follows: "With little constitutional initiative, . . . at forty-five I was drifting on the lines of simple respectability as aimlessly as one very well could."

And yet within less than ten years he was destined to win a fame that reached every nation and to exert an influence that soon reshaped the navies of the great powers. At the age of fifty-six he retired, but he could not be spared: in an emergency two years later he was recalled by cable from a distance of four thousand miles to active duty in Washington; and his last assignment was not ended till he had reached the age of seventy-two. It is a unique naval career that is not distinctive until the officer has passed forty-five and then continues for nearly thirty years.

Mahan occupies the supreme position in the American Navy as a writer, and his particular theme is the influence of sea power upon history.



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ALFRED THAYER MAHAN

The story of Mahan as a line officer is comparatively uneventful, though he rose to the rank of rear admiral. His father, a graduate of West Point, was on duty there for forty years as professor of engineering, civil and military. At the Military Academy Alfred Thayer Mahan was born; and although he left the parental home while still a boy, he was later to show the influence of his father's studies in military strategy and tactics, a field that few in America had attempted to cultivate.

Mahan, the first of the officers treated in this volume to graduate from the Naval Academy, received an appointment as midshipman in 1856. Studying the academy register, he discovered that an appointee might enter any class for which he could pass the examinations. With his excellent preparation he proposed, by a little preliminary study on points where he was lacking, to omit the fourth class (freshman) altogether and enter the third class. In this he was successful, and he graduated in three years. Although classes at Annapolis have been graduated early, at times when officers have been greatly needed, Mahan is the only midshipman who took the full course and was permitted to omit the fourth-class year. He was graduated second in his class.

The fifties marked the transition from sail to steam, and Mahan was fortunate at the academy and in his first year of sea service in seeing much of the old navy.

Ours was still a navy of single, isolated cruisers following the traditions of 1812; and, as Mahan pointed out, even when we had ships of the line they constituted a paradox: they sailed singly—there was no line. He characterized the Naval Academy of his time as "conservative rather than progressive"; and said again,

"My most susceptible years were colored by lingering traditions of the sail period." But it was by no means time ill spent: "For myself personally, when I came to write naval history, long years after, I derived invaluable aid from the principles and the simpler evolutions thus assimilated and remembered."

Mahan's first cruise was made in the frigate *Congress* to Brazil. The ship was at Montevideo two years later when news came of the firing on Fort Sumter, with orders to return immediately.

In the Civil War Mahan had a fair share of important service without being engaged in any enterprise in which his own assignment was particularly hazardous or thrilling. In November, 1861, when the Atlantic Fleet under Du Pont captured the forts at the entrance to Port Royal, the *Pocahontas*, with Mahan as first lieutenant, joined in the attack. After this there came two assignments of blockade duty, the first off Charleston and the second off Sabine Pass, Texas. Such duty was dull enough anywhere. South Carolina, however, where a large number of the Union fleet were collected, was characterized by Mahan as "a blooming garden of social refreshment compared with the wilderness of the Texas coast."

> Charleston was not very far from the Chesapeake or Delaware, in distance or in time. Supply vessels, which came periodically, and at not very long intervals, arrived with papers not very late, and with fresh provisions not very long slaughtered; but by the time they reached Galveston or Sabine Pass, which was our station, their news was stale, and we got the bottom tier of fresh beef. The ship to which I there belonged was a small steam-corvette, which, with two gunboats, constituted all the social possibilities. Happily for myself, I did not join till midway in the corvette's stay

off the port, which lasted in all nearly six months before she was recalled in mercy to New Orleans. I have never seen a body of intelligent men reduced so nearly to imbecility as my shipmates then were.

A short tour of duty at the Naval Academy near the middle of the Civil War brought Mahan and Luce together, probably for the first time. During the practice cruise of 1863, when Luce in command of the *Macedonian* took the midshipmen to England, Mahan sailed with him as first lieutenant. The last part of the war found Mahan on the staff of Admiral Dahlgren, and he was at Charleston when Sherman, marching north from Savannah with his army, forced its surrender. He thus witnessed the hoisting of the flag over Fort Sumter by General Robert Anderson, who as Major Anderson had lowered it just four years before. It was made a highly formal occasion, with an address by Henry Ward Beecher.

Mahan as a young naval officer had a love for travel, and an understanding of how to turn his travels to account. In 1867 he set out on the historic *Iroquois* for a three-year cruise to China and Japan, which he characterized as "the dream of years to me." The *Iroquois*, going by the West Indies to Rio de Janeiro, sailed to the Cape of Good Hope and visited Cape Town, Madagascar, Aden, Muscat, Bombay, Singapore, Manila, and Hongkong. At the last place, where it remained for some months, Mahan had a chance to inhale what his captain called "the regular China smell."

More interesting to him, however, was the visit to Japan. It was only fourteen years since Perry had made his treaty opening two ports for American trade; and shortly before the coming of the *Iroquois*, Japan had conceded two more treaty ports, in the Inland Sea—

Osaka and Kobe—to be formally opened at the beginning of 1868. The *Iroquois*, with all the American ships and those of other nations in the vicinity, assembled to add impressiveness to the occasion. Thus Mahan had the opportunity of seeing Japan before she was in any degree modernized, when Americans were just as strange to the Japanese as the people and their country were to the Americans. Ever fond of walking, he found interest in exploring all places within easy reach. Presumably there was a slight element of danger connected with the trips, for at this time the unrest in the country was so great as to verge on civil war, and on more than one occasion the French and other Europeans had to defend themselves from the natives. Soon American officers were ordered to carry heavy navy revolvers on their walks. Mahan was frequently followed by curious mobs as he went to unfrequented spots; but he went alone at every opportunity and was delighted by the picturesque country. A small stream near Kobe, "to memory dear," he speaks of with special enthusiasm:

> Following along it one day, and so up the hills, I struck at length, well within the outer range, an exquisite Japanese valley, profound, semicircular, and terraced, closed at either end by a passage so narrow that it might well be called a defile. The suddenness with which it burst upon me, like the South Sea upon Balboa, the feeling of remoteness inspired by its isolation, and its own intrinsic beauty, struck home so forcible a prepossession that it remained a favorite resort, to which I guided several others; for it must be borne in mind that, up to our coming, the hill tracks of Kobe knew not the feet of foreigners, and there was still such a thing as first discovery. Some time afterwards, when I had long returned home, a naval officer told me that the place was known to him and others as Mahan's Valley.

The stay of the *Iroquois* at Yokohama was marked by the arrival of the first ironclad to be included in the Japanese Navy. It was the Confederate ram *Stonewall Jackson*, built too late to see any fighting in the Civil War. The Japanese, purchasing her from the United States, entered the contest for naval supremacy.

Mahan's final duty on the Asiatic station was in command of a gunboat which was to be sold at Yokohama. When orders came for his return to the United States, he obtained permission to go by way of Suez and Europe, and took advantage of the opportunity to visit various important cities on the way. On reaching Europe he found a six months' leave awaiting him. Among the opportunities he later prized were a visit to Rome under the papal régime and one to Paris under the empire; both of these cities were to undergo revolution within the year. These studies or pastimes were a bit unusual for a naval officer; but Mahan, like Herodotus of old, by his wanderings was laying the foundation for his historical studies. Not for twenty years was he to give himself seriously to writing. The experience was significant as showing his leanings.

Mahan's further service as line officer at sea was like that of most of his contemporaries, slight and uneventful. In 1873–1874 he commanded the side-wheel steamer *Wasp* in the Rio de la Plata; in 1883–1885 he commanded the steam sloop *Wachusett* attached to the South Pacific Squadron; and in 1893–1895 he commanded the cruiser *Chicago*, on the European station.

With the founding of the Naval War College in 1885 the career of Mahan may be said to have had its beginning. A letter from Admiral Luce, which found him marking time on the western coast of South

America, acquainted him with the project and asked him to join the teaching staff, directing the work in strategy and tactics and also in naval history. The idea at once appealed to him. His father's success at West Point, in going outside the limits of his designated field of engineering and introducing something of tactics, gave Mahan assurance that he might attempt the same for naval military science. Strangely enough, as it seems to us, and undoubtedly as it seemed to him in later years, he wrote, "Naval history gave me more anxiety, and I afterwards found it was that which Luce particularly desired of me." He had already written for Scribner's a small volume, one of a series on the navy in the Civil War, entitled "The Gulf and Inland Waters," by no means badly written, but showing no especial distinction. Temperamentally disposed to underrate his own powers, he said to himself, as he reflected on Luce's offer, that he was profoundly ignorant not only of naval history but of all history and quite incompetent to undertake this phase of the College work. Yet as he thought it over and began reading he was not only drawn toward the idea, he was fascinated. Before long he received a genuine inspiration. The following is the way he describes the genesis of "Sea Power":

> The *Wachusett* was lying at Callao, the seaport of Lima, as dull a coast town as one could dread to see. Lima being but an hour distant, we frequently spent a day there, the English Club extending to us its hospitality. In its library was Mommsen's "History of Rome," which I gave myself to reading, especially the Hannibalic episode. It suddenly struck me, whether by some chance phrase of the author I do not know, how different things might have been could Hannibal have invaded Italy by sea, as the Romans often

had Africa, instead of by the long land route; or could he, after arrival, have been in free communication with Carthage by water. This clew, once laid hold of, I followed up in the particular instance. It and the general theory already conceived threw on each other reciprocal illustration; and between the two my plan was formed by the time I reached home, in September, 1885. I would investigate coincidently the general history and naval history of the past two centuries, with a view to demonstrating the influence of the events of the one upon the other.

Because of unsettled conditions in Central American republics, it was nearly a year before the *Wachusett* could return to San Francisco and Mahan be detached. Though this delayed him in reading and in making immediate preparation for his new task, the time was by no means wasted; since he had not the books necessary for fully informing himself, he gave himself to thinking. In consequence the final work had, in all probability, more originality than if he had been able to follow his plan.

The great classic on military science was "The Art of War," written by Jomini, a Swiss officer on Napoleon's staff. Mahan had become acquainted with Jomini and Hamley through his father, and he began to study them before his return. Early in his study the idea occurred to him of applying to naval warfare the principles they laid down. In naval history next to nothing had yet been written except narratives and anecdotes; that is, there had been no systematic treatment of wars and campaigns, with analysis showing the strength and the weakness of opposing forces and explanation of success or failure. Mahan was impressed by Jomini's dictum, in opposition to the commonly accepted idea, that the statesman and general do not

occupy unrelated fields. From a striking phrase of Jomini's, "the sterile glory of fighting battles merely to win them," he deduced a maxim of his own, one which military men he knew often overlooked, "War is not fighting, but business." He also gained some assistance in the method of approaching his subject from a work on the history of the French Navy by Lapeyrouse-Bonfils, published in 1845. It did not amount to much as history; but the author had a quiet, philosophical way of summing up causes and effects in general history as connected with maritime affairs, a method of approach closely related to Mahan's own idea.

In September, 1885, Mahan returned from the cruise in the South Pacific. Then followed interruptions, with a month of severe illness during the winter; but he gave himself unreservedly to preparing for his new work. He still felt his limitations severely and spoke of them in the following, which is important also for giving the keynote of "The Influence of Sea Power upon History" and, indeed, of all his work:

> It was with such hasty equipment that I approached my self-assigned task, to show how the control of the sea, commercial and military, had been an object powerful to influence the policies of nations; and equally a mighty factor in the success or failure of those policies. This remained my guiding aim; but incidentally thereto I had by this determined to prepare a critical analysis of the naval campaigns and battles, a decision for which I had to thank Jomini chiefly.

Mahan was detailed to the War College in October, 1885, while Admiral Luce was still its president, but he did not take up his residence there until the following August. He spent the intervening time in working on "Sea Power," originally prepared as lectures to the College. Luce appreciated the formidable character of

the task Mahan was grappling with, and himself attended to duty assigned to the latter so that Mahan might work on uninterruptedly through the spring and summer. It was an instance of generous assistance and splendid coördination. Mahan waited until the last of May before he began to write; but so fully had he thought out his subject that in September he had the whole on paper in lecture form—excellent speed considering how much of it was pioneer work. Large maps were required. These he drew, assisted by Lieutenant William McCarty Little. Proper equipment was not to be had, so that often they used the floor as their table. Also twenty or more battle plans were needed, and these Mahan prepared by cutting cardboard vessels of different colors to represent the contending forces. He saw the advantage in mobility possessed by his cardboard squadrons, and would move them about at will so as to test the account of a battle; when he was sure of the correctness of position he would paste the ships in place.

As narrated in the last chapter, the War College had a precarious existence during its early years; but although the officers attending it may at first have been skeptical of its value, they were strongly impressed by the originality and force of Mahan's lectures, and it was this success that lured Mahan on to his still greater field as writer.

Reading extensively in history and other subjects during the years following, Mahan revised his lectures of 1886, added more battle narratives as examples, and published them in 1890. This, his first great work, "The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783," awakened world-wide attention. In England, especially, the comments and reviews were extremely favorable.

A review thirty-two pages in length appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, written by Sir John Laughton, professor of modern history in King's College, University of London, and lecturer on naval history at the Royal Naval College. A long review, discriminating and enthusiastic, appeared in the London *Times*. Lord Roberts, the veteran soldier, publicly announced that the book had given him more pleasure than any other he had read for many years, and Gladstone is said to have regarded it as one of the greatest of modern works. Our own Roosevelt, then civil service commissioner in Washington, wrote a few days after its appearance:

> During the last two days I have spent half my time, busy as I am, in reading your book. That I found it interesting is shown by the fact that, having taken it up, I have gone straight through and finished it. . . . It is a *very* good book—admirable; and I am greatly in error if it does not become a classic.

Among naval officers appreciative and enthusiastic letters came from Admirals Luce, Goodrich, Sampson, and Schley of the American Navy and equally laudatory letters from Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, Sir Geoffrey Phipps Hornley (Admiral of the Fleet), and other only less distinguished officers of the Royal Navy.

It was translated into various foreign languages of Europe and also into Japanese, and in no country did it leave a deeper and more lasting impression than in Japan.

It had been difficult to find a publisher, and the one who accepted it had to be guaranteed against loss. No one was more surprised by its success than the modest, unassuming author.

It is interesting to read in "From Sail to Steam" (Mahan's autobiography) his own statement as to the conscious effort he made in all his early writing to attain excellence of style, believing that "style is the man." He writes:

> I have never purposely attempted to imitate the style of any writer, though I unconsciously plagiarize an apt expression. But gradually, and almost unconsciously, I formed a habit of closely scrutinizing the construction of sentences by others; generally a fault-finding habit. As I progressed, I worked out a theory for myself, just as I had the theory of the influence of sea power.

He quotes from Dr. Johnson a maxim that had guided him: "Do not exact from yourself at one effort of excogitation, propriety of thought and elegance of expression. Invent first and then embellish."

The habit of closely observing the successes and failures of others and of holding tenaciously to right working principles is sure to bring improvement in writing. For Mahan it certainly did. He found much to correct in his manuscripts and proof sheets, but he kept uncompromisingly at the task. Later he remarked that his writing at times had suffered from his "besetting anxiety" to be exact and lucid; that is, he tended to be overcautious, and at times overtaxed the reader by the accumulation of clauses in his aim that "the whole should be at once apprehended." It is undoubtedly true that one who is fagged or unwilling to put forth his full powers will commonly leave Mahan's substantial volumes on the shelves; but he who makes the effort never fails to gain a rich and stimulating return.

The years 1890 and 1891, when there was no session of the War College and its existence was hanging as by a thread, were in truth very favorable to Mahan. He

was continued at the War College, but without any assigned duties. Even before his first successful book had been published he had been reading extensively, and in the period of leisure he set himself diligently to writing "The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire." This was submitted to the test of use as lectures before publication.

Before the last-named work appeared Mahan was ordered to sea. He regarded himself as more useful in his literary and historical capacity at the College, and sympathetic fellow officers urged this view upon the Department; but the Bureau of Navigation thought differently, and Mahan sailed as captain of the new armored cruiser *Chicago*.

He already had in mind his next work, in continuation of the history of sea power,—its relation to the War of 1812,—and he planned to do extensive reading and also some writing at sea. But in both plans he was disappointed. The interruptions were too frequent. "Neither a ship nor a book," he writes, "is patient of a rival, and I soon ceased the effort to serve both."

Before the cruise was completed his interest had turned to Nelson, and a biography of the English admiral was his next work. Into this he threw himself with marked enthusiasm and produced one of the greatest naval biographies yet written, perhaps the greatest.

After an interruption of nine years he resumed work on the War of 1812. It was not with the keenest enthusiasm, for he admitted that as a whole the treatment "must be flat in interest as well as laborious in execution." This period in our history forms a book, parts of which do not glow with vigor or patriotism. In suggesting his difficulties Mahan alludes to a Chinese portrait painter who answers a dissatisfied patron,

"How can pretty face make, when pretty face no have got?" However, he had resolved on the completion of his Sea Power series; and though it required three years of labor, he gave to the last volumes scholarship and thoroughness even beyond that of the earlier ones. For his data he went to original documents in Washington, Ottawa, and London, and he added to what was known of the period, both in material and in interpretation.

Meanwhile he had been frequently contributing to magazines articles on naval history and strategy. The best of those that appeared in the nineties were collected in a volume and published under the name "The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future." The titles of the different papers included in this—"Hawaii and our Future Sea Power" (which orginally appeared in 1893), "The Isthmus and Sea Power" (1893), "Possibilities of an Anglo-American Reunion" (1894), "Preparedness for Naval War" (1897), and "Strategic Features of the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico" (1897)—all show how keenly alive Mahan was to questions which few people then regarded as vital, but which after a lapse of ten, twenty, or thirty years still seem modern and important for discussion. To suggest how clear and farsighted his vision was, just one fragment will be cited, from "The United States Looking Outward," which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1890:

> Coincident with these signs of change in our own policy there is a restlessness in the world at large which is deeply significant, if not ominous. . . . The incident of the Samoan Islands, trivial apparently, was nevertheless eminently suggestive of European ambitions. . . . All over the world German commercial and colonial push is coming into collision with other nations.

Had Mahan attempted to write on the causes and antecedent events of the World War twenty-four years later, he could not have introduced anything more direct and illuminating.

Mahan occupies the first place as a naval historian, not only in America but in the whole world. He was the first to discover philosophy in naval affairs. He made a study not merely of events but of events in their relation to the affairs and the progress of nations. Enough has been written to suggest that his books made an impression. It now remains to consider his influence on national and international affairs.

Although Mahan has by no means been without honor in our country, it must be admitted that with the exception of a comparatively small and select group—men like Luce, Goodrich, and Roosevelt—followed by an equally small reading public, this country did not recognize the soundness of his ideas until several foreign nations had enthusiastically hailed him as one of the great thinkers and writers of the present age.

England first appreciated the value of his work, and it is easy to see why. In much of his early writings he had turned for illustrations to English history; he cited England as the best example of a nation possessing sea power because of geographical position; and he presented a lesson that England quickly saw was applicable to her, as he stressed the influence of sea power upon history—from the past divining the future. In 1893–1894, when his ship, the *Chicago*, was visiting English ports, he was overwhelmed by invitations from distinguished naval officers and statesmen, including two dinners given by Queen Victoria. At this time, too, he had conferred upon him the honorary degrees

of D.C.L. by Oxford and LL.D. by Cambridge. Favorable reviews of his books, and articles in discussion of his ideas, were constantly appearing in the magazines and newspapers. This made a strong impression upon the British public; and when the navies of Germany and Japan, stimulated in large part by Mahan's teachings, took on new life, the British Royal Navy entered upon a policy of reform, thoroughgoing and fundamental, which required a decade for accomplishment.

Taylor, in his biography of Mahan, relates that naval authorities in Cape Town, Africa, cabled to the British Admiralty asking what books they could best buy for their new naval library. "Buy Mahan," ticked the answer. And when they sent a further inquiry, remarking that they already had secured several of his works, there came a second cable, "Buy more Mahan."

The hint of what the influence of Mahan was to be on Germany is afforded by a private telegram sent 26 May, 1894, by the Kaiser to Poultney Bigelow:

> I am just now not reading but devouring Captain Mahan's book; and am trying to learn it by heart. It is a first-class work and classical in all points. It is on board all my ships and constantly quoted by my captains and officers.
>
> William, I. and R.

To educate the people to the realization of the necessity of a large navy, the German government ordered Mahan's books to be translated into German and copies to be sent to schools and libraries, and a complete set to be placed on every German warship. Shortly after this, began the great expansion of the German Navy.

In no country has there been a keener interest in Mahan's works than in Japan, and all his important writings have been translated into Japanese and published. In 1897 the Oriental Association of Tokyo, comprising thirteen hundred ministers of state, members of the Diet, civil and military officers, teachers, editors, bankers, and merchants, wrote to Mahan saying that they were publishing a translation of "The Influence of Sea Power upon History":

> The chief aim of the association is to investigate various questions of policy and diplomacy, both historical and contemporary.... Translation of your valuable book we adopted as one of our honorable transactions. Our purpose was, indeed, to give our countrymen the knowledge of naval affairs, at present the most important knowledge in this part of the world. The facts show that our humble purpose is realized. The Japanese edition of your valuable work attracted the attention of our public; the Naval and Military Colleges have adopted it as their textbook.
>
> We presented a volume to each of Their Majesties, the Emperor and Crown Prince of Japan, and received an honor of Their Majesties' approval. Subsequently the Imperial Household Department bought from us 300 volumes in accordance with the royal purpose of subscribing to every middle, higher middle, and normal school in Japan. To tell the truth, several thousand volumes were sold in a day or two.

Thus Japan prepared for Tsu-shima.

Nor has the influence of Mahan in Japan been limited to a few years. In a recent report of the Japanese Naval Academy at Edajima the statement is made that students read Mahan in the original in order to learn English.

Finally, Mahan has had his influence in American naval history. There is a wide gulf between the first half

of the eighties, when the United States had not a single ship that could be classed as modern, whether battleships, armored cruisers, protected cruisers, or any other type, and the late nineties, when our navy had risen to third place and possibly to second among the navies of the world. Two officers who were responsible for this more than any others were Luce and Mahan. It was for Luce to lead the way to a better organization of the navy, and to provide means for educating officers and men so that they could carry on this organization, and it was for Mahan to awaken the public to the need of a navy and the necessity of supporting it. Roosevelt in his forceful way says of the latter: "In the vitally important task of convincing the masters of all of us—the people as a whole—of the importance of a true understanding of naval needs, Mahan stood alone. There was no one else in his class, or anywhere near it."

What the government thought of him in 1898 at the beginning of the Spanish-American War is evidenced by the fact that although he was on the retired list and in Italy, he was promptly recalled by cable in order that he might serve with Admiral Sicard and Captain Crowninshield on the Naval War Board. Then for fourteen years following he was given further assignments in Washington, at the Naval War College, and at the Hague Peace Conference.

Mahan was not brilliant as a line officer; he was scarcely above the average. Indeed, his father, analyzing his powers, told him early in life that he was better adapted to a civilian pursuit than to a naval career. In later years Mahan, realizing how distasteful matters of discipline had always been to him, agreed with his father's opinion. Perhaps he was right; but

on the other hand we must not lose sight of the fact that his brilliant historical work required for its foundation a thorough knowledge of the sea, such as only practical experience in the navy could afford. Fortunately there were a hundred others who were eager to do the work of line officer, for which he felt disinclination. His great service to the navy and to the nation was in writing; and though he preached most effectively the value of sea power, he himself exemplified the adage (adapted) "The pen is mightier than the ship."

What was Mahan's contribution to the American Navy? Before a critical period in our history he showed the supreme importance of sea power. If Luce taught the navy to think, Mahan taught it to study and write. Practically none had written before his time; but a multitude of officers have followed him, some of them with distinguished success.

CHAPTER XII

GEORGE DEWEY (1837–1917)

IT WAS Dewey's good fortune early in his career to serve under one of whom he could say fifty years later, "Farragut has always been my ideal of the naval officer." Dewey's coming to distinction was like Farragut's. Though he was highly appreciated by a small circle of friends, yet even when he had reached the age of sixty-one he was not conspicuous in the Service and was quite unknown outside. But shortly after he had taken command of the small Asiatic Squadron, there came the Spanish-American War. He says that in the many perplexities which had to be faced he asked himself, "What would Farragut do?" The guiding influence of his ideal won for him a brilliant victory and led him safely through the intricate maze that followed. An important element in Dewey's character consisted in recognizing the worth of a noble tradition and weaving it into his own life and service.

Dewey was appointed to the Naval Academy from Vermont, his native state (he was born at Montpelier, 26 December, 1837). His class entered in 1854, sixty strong. At the end of the first year their number was reduced to thirty-five, and standing thirty-third, two from the foot, was Dewey. Indeed, since he was below passing in geography and history, he would undoubtedly have "bilged" if the rule had not been different from that in operation at the present time. A good

grade in mathematics, raising the average, saved him. The process of eliminating midshipmen who did not come up to the standard was a severe one. Of Dewey's class only fifteen were graduated. Of these he stood number five; and on the final examination for a commission, after three years at sea, he had risen to number three—a standing which affords an interesting comparison with that of "plebe" year.

In talking over midshipman days at the Naval Academy, he said that he was familiarly known as "Shang" Dewey; why, he did not recall. The picture he drew of the institution on the Severn, before the days of athletic sports and general midshipmen hops, was not a colorful one. The two exciting events he mentioned were a personal combat that occurred in the mess hall when he was called a vile name and promptly held the offender to account, and the midshipmen's expression of their dislike for an assistant professor, known as "Bull Pup," by capturing him and imprisoning him in a glass hood in the chemical laboratory. Even such diversions, it seems, were indulged in only rarely. "The rule was one endless grind of acquiring knowledge."

In his final estimate Dewey placed a high value on the result of this grind; but something still better was to come to him in the course of duty at sea. Early in the Civil War he had been assigned to the side-wheeler frigate *Mississippi*; and when six officers senior to him had been transferred to other ships he was temporarily made executive, though he was only twenty-three years old. He proved efficient, and his captain liked him; in consequence, though at one time pressure was exerted to give this important billet to an older officer, he was retained. When Farragut began operations

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GEORGE DEWEY

against New Orleans, the *Mississippi* was one of the largest units in his command; and during the next two years Dewey was to have many intimate glimpses of the admiral. Years afterwards he wrote, "Valuable as the training of Annapolis was, it was poor schooling beside that of serving under Farragut in time of war."

In the passing of the forts below New Orleans, Farragut had assigned the *Mississippi* a place in the first division, just behind the *Pensacola.* Melancthon Smith, commanding the *Mississippi,* had opposed the idea of running the gantlet at night, expressing his preference for hazarding it at full speed during the day. Then he could see his enemies and follow the tortuous course of the river, which abounded in shoals and obstructions. When final preparations for the battle were being made, he remarked to his executive: "I cannot see in the night. I am going to leave that to you, Dewey. You have younger eyes."

Thus it happened that as the *Mississippi* steamed up the river, Dewey from his post on the hurricane deck had the responsibility of navigating the ship, the captain giving his attention to the *Mississippi's* batteries.

The ships were running without lights, and Dewey's duty, besides keeping in the channel, was to maintain his assigned position behind the *Pensacola.* The forts, discovering them, had opened with a furious cannonade. Dewey was having his first experience under fire. The *Pensacola* made a spirited reply to the forts, and as she fired she stopped twice. Why, Dewey did not know, for orders were to pass the forts at full speed; but he checked his progress accordingly. He seems to have had no close encounters with the fire rafts, one of which drove the *Hartford* aground, but he did have a sharp brush with a curious-looking enemy, first pointed out

by an observer in the foretop. Emerging from the darkness on their port bow and bearing down upon them was what looked like a gigantic turtle. It was recognized as the Confederate ram *Manassas*. There was no time for Dewey to consult his captain. As he saw the *Manassas* maneuvering to ram his ship, he countered by putting his helm over and heading directly for her. However, Commander Warley, an old Union officer, who was captain of the ram, knew his advantage. As he had a craft about a fourth of the size of the *Mississippi*, he was much quicker in turning. Making a half circle, he not only eluded the side-wheeler but, charging at full speed, struck her just abaft the port paddle wheel, slicing off a piece of solid timber seven feet long. The *Mississippi* trembled as if she had run aground. Dewey had the pumps started and, finding that the injury was a mere scratch, sped along. Had Warley succeeded in striking the vulnerable paddle wheel, as he might have done but for Dewey's quick decision, he would have crippled his opponent severely.

Later, just as day was breaking, when the leading ships had destroyed or driven off the Confederate River Defense Squadron and were approaching quarantine seven miles above the forts, the *Mississippi* discovered the *Manassas* stealing back, apparently to make a further attack upon the fleet. Commander Smith obtained permission from Farragut to engage the ram, called upon Dewey to turn the ship,—a delicate task in the narrow and unfamiliar channel,—and sought again to run down the enemy. This time Warley either was caught at a disadvantage or despaired of further combat. As the *Mississippi* bore down upon her, the *Manassas* dodged the blow and headed straight into the bank. Two heavy broadsides from the *Mississippi*

worked havoc, and soon the crew of the *Manassas* could be seen crawling ashore over her bows. The guns of the forts, opening again upon the attacking ship, made it impossible for Smith to get the disabled ram and save her for the Union fleet. Consequently, after taking possession of Warley's signal book and diary, he set fire to her and returned to the victorious fleet.

A project of a similar character as planned, but tragic to the old *Mississippi* as it worked out, followed a year later when, as related in a previous chapter, Farragut attempted to lead his fleet past the batteries of Port Hudson.

It was ten o'clock in the evening when the Union fleet got under way. Only Farragut's flagship, the *Hartford*, with the *Albatross* lashed to her side, succeeded in getting past. Both the *Richmond* and the *Monongahela*, disabled by the heavy fire and by engine trouble, were obliged to return to their starting place. A night mist hung over the river; and the smoke of the ships and guns made an impenetrable gloom for the rear of the column, where the *Mississippi* came. On the first alarm the Confederates had lighted piles of cordwood soaked with pitch, and by the light of this blaze they used their heavy cannon on all except the *Hartford* with marked effect. Still the chances for the *Mississippi's* passing the forts would have been good but for one wrong order. All the ships had been intrusted to river pilots. The pilot on the *Mississippi*, having led the ship slowly through the darkness to the point above the dangerous shoal, gave the order "helm to starboard and full speed"; but he had miscalculated his position, and a moment later the *Mississippi* drove high on the sand bar. For half an hour strenuous efforts were made to free her; but the engines raced in vain, and running

the port guns in made no impression. The Confederates, discovering her plight, trained their guns with increasing accuracy. When the forward storeroom, which contained inflammable materials, was pierced by hot shot and caught fire, Commander Smith could do nothing except to abandon ship. The one consolation in the painful affair was the coolness of the officers and the good discipline of the crew. It devolved upon Dewey to get the crew off, a task of some difficulty because of the wounded and the reduced number of boats, all on the exposed side having been destroyed by the enemy's shot.

Commander Smith in his report wrote:

> I consider that I should be neglecting a most important duty should I omit to mention the coolness of my executive officer, Mr. George Dewey, and the steady, fearless, and gallant manner in which the officers and men of the *Mississippi* defended her, and the orderly and quiet manner in which she was abandoned.

For the complement of the *Mississippi* it seemed a gloomy failure; but later Dewey wrote, "In that disaster, as in every action, I myself had gained experience in the midst of danger and confusion when I was still young enough to profit by the lesson."

This ability, the power to learn from experience,—others' as well as his own,—was one of Dewey's marked characteristics. It is not so spectacular in its working as originality and impetuosity, which drive ahead, sometimes right and sometimes wrong. However, it is quite as likely to bring results, and, developed into its highest form, it becomes a kind of genius, certainly a gift that is rare and valuable.

A few weeks later when Smith and Dewey had been assigned to the *Monongahela*, lying in the Red River

below Port Hudson, Dewey had opportunity for intimate acquaintance with Farragut. The *Hartford* continued above the batteries; accordingly, while attending to operations on the lower reaches of the river, Farragut made the *Monongahela* his flagship and lived mostly on deck.

Dewey was struck by the simplicity of his methods, the absence of "red tape" and of the usual large amount of paper work. Generally Farragut wrote his orders himself, his knee or the ship's rail often serving as a rest. It will be recalled that he went to sea when he was ten and never entirely overcame the lack of early schooling. This explains the following story related by Dewey, which has in it something delightfully simple and human: One day when the admiral was writing at his impromptu table he looked up and said, "Now, how in the devil do you spell Apalachicola? Some of these educated young fellows from Annapolis must know."

Dewey continued as executive throughout the war, being assigned to various ships, most of them of large tonnage. His last assignment was to the *Colorado*, on which he had a share in the taking of Fort Fisher. The big frigate with its crew of seven hundred men at first presented a formidable problem in discipline. About a third of the crew were bounty jumpers, as poor as the draft would admit. The previous executive, severe at intervals but erratic, at times had as many as one hundred in irons. On the first morning Dewey tipped unceremoniously out of their hammocks a score who ignored the call to assemble on deck. Later, the ringleader of the trouble-makers, a giant red-headed Englishman named Webster, who had been put in the hold, broke free of his irons and began smashing stone

soda and ale bottles stowed there. A master at arms sent to arrest him reported that the man threatened to kill the first person who appeared on the ladder. It was an awkward situation, for in going into the hold an officer's body was exposed on the ladder some seconds before he could use his hands or see. Yet, for the effect on the crew, Dewey saw he must not hesitate. Seizing a revolver, he started for the hold. Webster yelled up his threat as he had to the others. To this the determined officer replied: "Webster, this is the executive officer, Mr. Dewey. I am coming down and, Webster, you may be sure of this, if you raise a finger against me I shall kill you." He slid down the ladder and faced Webster, stone ale bottle in hand and arm drawn back. Webster did not throw the bottle, but quietly submitted to arrest. After this the crew indulged in no more talk of mutiny.

It happened that among the young officers of the *Colorado* was Sampson. A warm friendship which was to last for life sprang up between Dewey and Sampson.

In 1867, nine years after graduation, Dewey was ordered to the Naval Academy. Here he had his first shore duty, three years in duration, serving under Vice Admiral Porter and later under Rear Admiral Worden. A month after he had received his orders he was married to Susan Boardman Goodwin, daughter of ex-Governor Goodwin of New Hampshire.

Of his faithful but not conspicuous service during the following twenty-seven years only one incident need be mentioned for our purposes. In 1873, when in command of the third-class sloop *Narragansett*, he was engaged in making soundings of the Gulf of California. Newspapers brought lurid accounts of the *Virginius* affair, in which Spain had dealt severely with a fili-

bustering expedition to Cuba, showing what was for Spain marvelous dispatch and, as some believed, giving scant consideration to law and the courts. Feeling was so high that war seemed inevitable. Going into the wardroom Dewey found his young officers enveloped in gloom, for, their ship being several thousand miles distant by sea from the theater of operations, they could take no part in the war.

"On the contrary, we shall be very much in it," Dewey responded. "If war with Spain is declared, the *Narragansett* will take Manila."

He says that already he had read whatever books were available on the Philippines. Thus, at least twenty-five years before Manila Bay became history he had begun preparations.

The next step toward Manila Bay was taken the latter part of 1897. The admiral commanding our Asiatic Squadron was to be relieved. The Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, who was rather autocratic and not friendly to Dewey, was known to be working to give the post to another officer; but Roosevelt, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, sought out Dewey and said: "I want you to go. You are the man who will be equal to the emergency if one arises." This by no means decided it, for it was the President who made the selection, but his choice fell upon Dewey.

Before leaving Washington he spent a month of study in going over such books and charts as he could find. Furthermore, he made inquiry as to the ammunition that the squadron had. To his dismay he learned that the supply was not only insufficient in the event of hostilities but below what was allowed for ships in time of peace; also that Pacific liners would not transport such a cargo, and that the cruiser *Charleston*, which was

to forward it, was laid up for six months to undergo an extensive overhauling. Personal insistence if tactfully applied works wonders; and before Dewey sailed from San Francisco on the mail steamer that took him to the East, he had seen half the promised supply loaded on the little *Concord*. The other half, which was to be shipped later on the old *Mohican*, reached the squadron only forty-eight hours before it sailed from Hongkong on the announcement that hostilities had begun.

War between the United States and Spain, fought that Cuba might be freed from further desolation and misery, was declared by Congress to have begun 21 April, 1898. Communications from Washington had been scant and infrequent, but the official announcement received by Dewey on the 25th came as no surprise. One of the significant features of the naval events in the Far East through all that most important year was the way Dewey had foreseen what was going to happen and had carefully prepared. As a result, when the various emergencies arose, no further preparation was required. All was in readiness.

For two months Dewey's squadron had been assembled at Hongkong, and the crews had been drilled in everything relating to war. Knowing that when hostilities began the British government, observing strict neutrality, would grant no further harbor facilities, he had quietly improvised a base at Mirs Bay, not far distant, where he arranged to have sent stores of various kinds secured from the less punctilious Chinese. Also he had purchased two supply ships.

Thus on the 23d, when there came a communication from the governor of Hongkong inclosing a copy of the British war-neutrality proclamation and asking that the American squadron leave not later than the 25th,

there was no confusion on Dewey's part; he sailed to Mirs Bay on the 24th. He was equally calm the next day, when there came a cable from the Secretary of the Navy:

> War has commenced between the United States and Spain. Proceed at once to Philippine Islands. Commence operations particularly against the Spanish fleet. You must capture vessels or destroy. Use utmost endeavor.

Only the first sentence of the message was required.

The American consul at Manila, Mr. O. F. Williams, had remained at his post as long as possible in order that he might bring the very last information of the defenses. Just as soon as he joined the American squadron, two days later, the signal was given to make preparations for getting under way.

A cautious commodore would have hesitated before sailing forth as Dewey did to meet the unknown. Mr. Williams brought news that the islands commanding the entrance to Manila Bay had been fortified—there were six modern rifles besides lesser guns bearing on Boca Grande, through which the ships were to pass—and that the channel had been mined. Several formidable batteries were located on the water front of Manila. They mounted thirty-nine heavy guns, the largest ones rifles of greater caliber than any in the American Squadron. Other batteries were placed at Sangley Point and Canacao, guarding Cavite. Dewey had seven ships to the enemy's six, with fifty-three guns over 4-inch caliber to their thirty-one, but as both squadrons were unarmored the heavy land guns were regarded as much more than offsetting this advantage. The Hongkong papers had constantly dwelt on the strength of the forts, which, being supplemented by the Spanish

ships and mines, they affirmed were impregnable. In sentiment the British were favorable to the Americans, but at the Hongkong Club no one would take a chance on the attacking squadron, even with heavy odds offered. On the eve of departure, when a British regiment entertained a group of officers, it is said that the comment freely expressed by the hosts was, "A fine set of fellows, but unhappily we shall never see them again."

Dewey was far from minimizing what he must meet; but he and his officers in a conference had already reached the conclusion that the difficulties of mining the entrance to Manila Bay were so great that what the Spaniards had accomplished need not be greatly feared. Moreover, Dewey counted much on the carefulness of American preparation and the ability of his gunners to handle their pieces in battle. The result showed that this competence decided the day and not the preponderance of force.

As we read of the other side, the Spaniards at home and in the Philippines had for some months been not altogether blind to the prospect of war. On the 15th of March the governor-general of the Philippines called a meeting at Manila to consider what steps should be taken. At this Admiral Montojo, commanding the naval forces, expressed the opinion that his "poor squadron would not be able to withstand the onslaught of the American ships and that he was firmly convinced that it would be destroyed." This in the drama of life cannot be regarded as other than a hint of a tragic ending.

On the trip from Mirs Bay to Manila the officers and men of the American squadron busied themselves by throwing overboard superfluous woodwork; they coiled

chain cables around the ammunition hoists; and they went through constant drills for battle as well as for making quick repairs in case of injury.

Just as the American consul left Manila, Montojo sailed thirty miles north to Subig Bay, which he deemed better for defense than Manila; but he promptly returned when he found that improvised fortifications had not been made. To make sure that he was not still there, Dewey on the morning of 30 April sent forward the *Boston* and the *Concord* to reconnoiter; he was not going to make the mistake of leaving the enemy on his flank as he attacked Manila. On returning they signaled that the bay was empty.

Preferring to pass the batteries at the entrance to Manila Bay under the cover of darkness, Dewey delayed his approach, first slowing down and finally stopping. Calling all the captains to the flagship in the afternoon, he held a short conference. This was largely social in its character, and was rather for an exchange of confidence than for anything else. Dewey remarks: "There was no discussion and no written order and no further particulars as to preparation. For every preparation that had occurred to us in our councils had already been made."

Before they left, he said, "We shall enter Manila Bay tonight, and you will follow the motions and movements of the flagship, which will lead."

Lieutenant (later Rear Admiral) Fiske describes the final approach to the bay:

> As darkness slowly descended, the scene took on a character at once soothing and disturbing; soothing, because everything was so beautiful and so calm; disturbing, because of the grim preparations evident. The guns were all ready; considerable ammunition was on deck, and the men lay or

sat or stood by their guns. As few lamps as possible were lit, and all lights which would shine outward were screened, except one small light over the stern of each ship. The night was clear and calm, and the hours from eight to twelve rather dragged. There was nothing to do, for all preparations had been made; there was nothing to see, except the dim outlines of a few ships and the vague outline of the coast two or three miles distant; and there was nothing to hear, except the sound of the engine and the swish of the water along the sides.

Dewey went back in thought to the night thirty-six years before when the Union fleet ran the forts below New Orleans, and the memory gave him confidence. He wrote afterwards:

Whenever I have been in a difficult situation, or in the midst of such a confusion of details that the simple and right thing to do seemed hazy, I have often asked myself, "What would Farragut do?" In the course of the preparations for Manila Bay I often asked myself this question, and I confess that I was thinking of him the night that we entered the Bay, and with the conviction that I was doing precisely what he would have done.

Though Dewey was now not lieutenant but commodore, responsible for all the American forces within a circle of several thousand miles, Farragut was still his leader.

The *Olympia* passed at a distance of half a mile the small island of El Fraile, on which there were known to be fortifications commanding Boca Grande, and then laid her course to northeast by north, heading up the bay. No ships had been discovered cruising off the entrance; no torpedo launches had dashed forward to attack; and the mines were as silent as had been expected. Various signals displayed on shore had been

noticed; otherwise all was quiet. Indeed, Dewey began to hope, as he steamed on at full speed, that his ships had not been observed. But at 12.10, when the rear of his column was between the islands of Corregidor and El Fraile, the El Fraile battery opened with a shot that passed between the *Petrel* and the *Raleigh*. The *Boston*, the *Concord*, the *Raleigh*, and the *McCulloch* promptly returned the fire. Two more shots followed from the island, and then the East seemed to have returned to her slumbers. All was peaceful as the squadron proceeded slowly up the broad bay toward Manila, twenty-five miles away, which Dewey purposed not to reach until dawn.

As later revealed, the Spaniards at Manila had been fully informed as to the movements of the American forces: a cable had told of their sailing from Mirs Bay for Manila, and a telegram reported their being sighted off Subig Bay. Yet that very evening Admiral Montojo and his officers left their ships at Cavite to attend a ball given by the admiral's wife at Manila, six miles distant. As the guns boomed in the distant forts at midnight—a sound that might well have been interpreted as a salute to America on her occupation of the Philippines—Montojo was leisurely returning by carriage. Some of his officers did not get back till the next morning when fighting had begun. This, the second hint of a tragic ending, presaged utter defeat as plainly as did the similar occurrence at the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War, when the Russian officers on shore at Port Arthur drank their cares away while the Japanese with their torpedo boats crept into the harbor to strike the first telling blow.

In the gray mist of morning Dewey, slowly circling toward Manila, looked in at the harbor but found only

merchantmen. A few minutes later when the haze of tropical dawn had cleared, he made out the Spanish squadron drawn up six miles distant in front of Cavite. They were "formed in an irregular crescent," protected at one extremity by the Cavite battery and that at Sangley Point, and at the other by the shoals off Las Pinas. They had taken position here rather than before Manila, in order that the city might be spared injury in bombardment. It may have been a beautiful sentiment to save the city intact; but since this meant that the ships were thus deprived of the much-needed support of the heavy Manila batteries, it was, from a military point of view, a grave error. To Spain the loss of the squadron meant the giving up not only of the city but of all the Philippines.

As the American ships turned from Manila toward the south, the Manila batteries opened fire, but their shot passed over. Only the *Boston* and the *Concord* deigned to reply, the rest saving their ammunition for the real business of the morning. The *Olympia* was now heading toward the Spanish line by a converging course, the other ships following at intervals of two hundred yards. Ten minutes after the Manila forts had opened, the Cavite batteries and the Spanish ships began firing, but their shell fell short. For twenty-five minutes more, though the American gunners constantly kept their pieces trained on the enemy, the ships steamed forward in silence. They could make out, besides many small vessels, six or eight fairly large craft, two of them at anchor with springs on their cables, the rest steaming about somewhat erratically, as they continued to do through the battle.

The contrast of names in the opposing squadrons suggests the character of the conflict. The American

force, in the order in which they steamed, were the *Olympia* (flag), the *Baltimore*, the *Raleigh*, the *Petrel*, the *Concord*, and the *Boston*. The Spanish line of battle consisted of the *Reina Cristina* (flag), the *Castilla*, the *Don Juan de Austria*, the *Don Antonio de Ulloa*, the *Isla de Luzón*, the *Isla de Cuba*, and the *Marqués del Duero*. When champions representing modern American cities are pitted against decadent remnants of grandiose Spanish feudalism, the combat is unequal to the last degree. It was *une affaire d'honneur*, and honor would not permit the Spanish queen and dons to yield until they had suffered fatal injuries.

At 5.40, when the range had been reduced to two and a half miles, Dewey, standing on the bridge, quietly gave the order "You may fire when you are ready, Gridley." From his station in the conning tower Captain Gridley communicated the word to the eager gunners. An 8-inch gun spoke first, giving the signal for general action.

When the American flagship neared the five-fathom curve off Cavite, she turned westward, bringing her port batteries to bear. The rest of the squadron followed and passed along the Spanish line until north of Sangley Point and about fifteen hundred yards distant. There the column, with helm to port, came about and passed again along the enemy line, this time using their starboard broadsides. Thus constantly changing the range, they continued their circle of fire, making three runs to westward and two to eastward. Leadsmen throughout were making soundings to guard against grounding. In the last run past, finding that the depth warranted it, Dewey led the ships nearer the enemy forces than before. The Spanish returned the fire spiritedly, but their great inaccuracy showed that the

rapid fire of the American squadron and the changing range had utterly confused them. The American attack was focused especially upon the two largest units, the *Reina Cristina* and the *Castilla.*

A torpedo launch which was detected coming out was quickly overwhelmed by the guns of the secondary batteries and went down, bows first. The *Don Juan de Austria,* and then the *Reina Cristina,* made gallant attempts to charge the *Olympia*; but each in turn was swept by the concentrated fire of all ships bearing and was driven back. Admiral Montojo gives testimony to the effectiveness of the American fire in his official report:

> The enemy shortened the distance between us, and rectifying his aim, covered us with a rain of rapid-fire projectiles. About 7.30 one shell destroyed completely the steering gear. I ordered to steer by hand, remaining without steering power in this interval, which was lengthened by the explosion of another shell on the poop, which put out of action nine men. Another destroyed the mizzen masthead and gaff, bringing down the ensign and my flag, which were replaced immediately. A fresh shell exploded in the officers' cabin, covering the hospital with blood, destroying the wounded who were being treated there. Another exploded in the ammunition-room astern, filling the quarters with smoke and preventing the working of the hand steering gear. As it was impossible to control the fire, I had to flood the magazines when it was already beginning to reach the cartridge-room.

Shortly after this Montojo gave orders to abandon ship, scuttling her as he transferred his flag to the *Isla de Cuba.* The captain of the *Reina,* Don Luis Cadarso, though wounded, gallantly directed the rescue of his men. While thus engaged he was struck by a shell and killed.

At 7.35, when the action had been in progress not quite two hours, the report was brought to the bridge of the *Olympia* that there remained only fifteen rounds per gun for the 5-inch battery. Such a supply would last hardly more than five minutes; and the battle, to all appearances, was far from being concluded. The prospect was so serious that Dewey promptly signaled to cease action, and withdrew to give opportunity for a redistribution of ammunition and to decide upon more effective methods of attack. One of Dewey's staff wrote:

> As we hauled off into the bay the gloom on the bridge of the *Olympia* was thicker than a London fog in November. Neither Commodore Dewey nor any of the staff believed that the Spanish ships had been sufficiently injured by our fire to prevent them from renewing the battle quite as furiously as they had previously fought. Indeed, we had all been distinctly disappointed in the results of our fire. Our projectiles seemed to go too high or too low — just as had been the case with those fired by the Spaniards. Several times the commodore had expressed dissatisfaction with the failure of our gunners to hit the enemy. . . .
>
> As I went aft the men asked me what we were hauling off for. They were in a distinctly different humor from that which prevailed on the bridge. They believed they had done well, and that the other ships had done likewise. The *Olympia* cheered the *Baltimore*, and the *Baltimore* returned the cheers with interest. . . . I told one of them [a gun captain] that we were merely hauling off for breakfast, which statement elicited the appeal to Captain Lamberton [Dewey's Chief of Staff], as he came past a moment later:
>
> "For God's sake, captain, don't let us stop now. To hell with breakfast!"

Upon inquiry Dewey was relieved to learn that the report on 5-inch shells had been incorrectly transmitted,

and that only 40 per cent had been expended. The supply of 8-inch shells was as yet hardly touched. The officers and crews, having had nothing but coffee at four o'clock, ate breakfast with hearty relish now that the extreme tension was lessened.

An hour later, at a signal from the *Olympia*, the different captains came on board the flagship. Each, with the report that his own ship had suffered slight or no injuries, thought his good fortune had been exceptional, and listened with amazement when he heard the same from all. The *Olympia* had been hulled five times, but not a man had been injured. The *Baltimore* had received five hits; one shell, entering forward of the starboard gangway, had pursued an erratic course, in its travels exploding a box of 3-pound ammunition; this was reponsible for the wounding of two officers and six men. Hits that were mere scratches had been received by the other vessels except the *Concord*. She had not been touched.

When Dewey withdrew from the engagement and thus undesignedly honored the breakfast hour, the victory was won, though he did not know it. While breakfast, the counting of ammunition, and the conference of the captains were in progress, the Spanish battle line was discovered to be melting away. The effectiveness of the American gunnery was realized when the *Castilla* burst into flames, the *Reina Cristina* blew up, and the smaller vessels fled for refuge behind the arsenal at Cavite. Only the *Don Antonio de Ulloa* kept her ensign flying and held to her original position beside the battery at Sangley Point.

At 11.16 Dewey, signaling for battle formation, led the way again into action. Under the concentrated fire of the American ships the *Ulloa* soon went down,

sinking with her colors still flying. About 12.30 the Spanish forces in the Government House at Cavite (where Montojo and his officers had taken refuge) surrendered, replacing the Spanish ensign with a white flag. Meanwhile the *Petrel*, whose shallow draft made her particularly useful for inshore work, had been sent to finish the craft abandoned in shallow water or concealed in the harbor of Cavite. She did thorough work, not returning until late in the afternoon, when she towed a long string of tugs and launches.

Commodore Dewey had carried out his instructions to the letter. Not a single Spanish fighting ship remained afloat. That night he summed it all up in his diary:

> Reached Manila at daylight. Immediately engaged the Spanish ships and batteries at Cavite. Destroyed eight of the former, including the *Reina Cristina* and *Castilla*. Anchored at noon off Manila.

The situation that now confronted Dewey has well been compared with that faced by Farragut after passing the forts below New Orleans. A large city lay helpless under his guns; but before demanding its surrender and taking it over he wanted to make sure of a force to hold it. The small contingent on his ships were quite unequal to such a task even if they had not been required afloat. It was necessary to have the coöperation of the army. This he promptly brought to the attention of the government, sending a dispatch boat to Hongkong to cable his message.

In the caution, firmness, and sound judgment displayed in the trying situation that developed during the three and a half remaining months of the war, Dewey showed power almost equal to that of gaining the initial victory.

At once Spain began to take measures for regaining her ascendancy in the Philippines and fitted out a fleet under Admiral Camara which in tonnage, type of ship, and guns was superior to Dewey's unarmored cruiser squadron. This was to sail by the short route through Suez. Further, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Japan hurried certain of their ships already in the East to Manila. Intervention was urged by one of the European powers and, as events showed, was no remote possibility. Finally, Filipino insurgents swarmed about Manila and Cavite in increasing numbers and, disappointed at the limiting of their opportunities to loot, threatened to break loose at any moment.

The forts at Manila had been silenced by the threat of a bombardment of the city. Mindful of what had happened to the *Maine* in Havana, Dewey took every precaution for safeguarding his ships from what conceivably might be attempted by the large force of the defeated enemy now concentrated within the walls of Manila. Thus, when a German launch approached one night without warning and continued to advance after being picked up by searchlights, Dewey ordered a 6-pound shot to fire over her and a marine to open with small arms. This made her stop and disclose her identity.

He had at once established a commercial blockade, but permitted the men of war of neutral nations to enter and leave the bay as they pleased, subject to the commonly recognized rules governing blockaded waters. British, French, and Japanese warships, recognizing that Dewey was supreme, reported on arrival and asked where they should anchor; but the German cruiser *Irene* came in without the least formality and chose her own anchorage. Three days later the German cruiser

Cormoran was about to do the same thing, although it was three o'clock in the morning. A launch, sent to ascertain her identity, receiving no attention, the *Raleigh* fired a shot across her bows. This peremptory summons brought the apparently surprised captain to his senses, and he stopped. The next incident in this unpleasant series was furnished by the arrival of a German transport with a force of fourteen hundred. She brought them as relief crews; but inasmuch as she remained day after day with a contingent equal in size to almost all in the American squadron, her presence caused uneasiness. When on the 12th of May, Vice Admiral von Diedrichs, with his flagship the *Kaiserin Augusta*, joined the aggregation, and it was reported that another German cruiser would follow shortly, Dewey, on making his official call, remarked that German commercial interests at Manila were giving great concern, though they were extremely slight in comparison with those of Great Britain, which was represented by only two cruisers. To this gentle remonstrance von Diedrichs bluntly replied, "I am here by order of the Kaiser, sir."

The German ships were guilty of frequently visiting Spanish posts and in many little ways ignoring the blockade. Finally, as Captain Coghlan of the *Raleigh* afterwards related, Dewey spoke very plainly to the German admiral's aid, who was sent to remonstrate at being obliged to stop their ships on an American officer's order:

> Tell your admiral I am blockading here. I am tired of the character of his conduct. I have made it as lenient as possible for him. Now the time has arrived when he must stop. Listen to me. Tell your admiral that the slightest infraction of these orders by himself or his officers will mean but one

thing. Tell him what I say—it will mean war. Make no mistake when I say it will mean war. If you people are ready for war with the United States, you can have it in five minutes.

It was an embarrassing situation, to be thus affronted seven thousand miles from home by a naval force stronger than his own. As it turned out, when von Diedrichs urged Captain Chichester, the senior British officer, to join him in defying the blockade order, Captain Chichester promptly refused, telling von Diedrichs emphatically that Dewey was in the right. After that the Germans gave no further trouble.

A part of Dewey's long preparation for service in Manila Bay had consisted of a close study of international law, and he knew what he had a right to demand.

In August, when transports had brought the required American troops, Dewey coöperated with Major General Merritt, commanding the army, in investing Manila. Though garrisoned by about thirteen thousand soldiers in or about the city, Manila surrendered on the 13th of August after only feeble signs of resistance.

The battle of Manila Bay of course did not decide the war; but, coming at a time when several nations were jeering at the new American Navy and were discussing intervention, it had a very salutary effect. Moreover, it was needed by America herself; for the whole Atlantic seaboard was suffering from an attack of nerves, occasioned by uncertainty as to where Cervera might strike and distrust of the navy's power to meet him. Montojo's squadron, which many neutrals had picked to win, suffered 161 killed and 210 wounded, contrasting with the losses of their western opponents, 8 slightly wounded. There was promise in the new navy.

After the battle of Manila Bay, Hawaii was quickly annexed by joint resolution of Congress, and Guam was occupied. A marked change came in the position of America. She had ceased to be a youthful and negligible member among the nations. Her isolation was over; before she herself had recognized the fact, she had a place in the circle of world powers.

Dewey, on his return, was honored and lionized as no other naval officer of our day. He accepted it all with great modesty. Very simply he explained, "It was the ceaseless routine of hard work and preparation in time of peace that won Manila and Santiago." Shortly after his victory he was promoted to the rank of rear admiral, and in March, 1899, was made admiral. Again he was following in the steps of his naval hero, Farragut.

CHAPTER XIII

WILLIAM THOMAS SAMPSON (1840–1902)

WHILE Luce and Mahan in the eighties and early nineties were laboring determinedly to train the seamen and educate the officers, as well as to awaken the country to the importance of sea power, Sampson was working with like effectiveness for the improvement of the matériel. But for him the Spanish-American War might have been a much more serious conflict. One of the discoveries twenty years later in the World War was the enormously important part that science may play in waging war. The idea was in reality not new; it was only because the applications of physics, chemistry, and other branches had been widened that their significance was more commonly recognized. Sampson had an eminently scientific mind. He saw the needs, and, though not himself a chemist or an electrician or a naval constructor or an inventor, he stated the problem to those who were. And his was the genius to pick the right men for studying the question, to recognize the merits of their solution so far as it was adequate, and to apply the results. He organized the whole. The scientist is commonly a quiet man, and one not easy to know intimately. This was true of Sampson; but those who had that intimate acquaintance speak of him in terms of highest admiration.

His service in the navy extended over forty-five years and was of a varied character, but for our purpose we

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WILLIAM THOMAS SAMPSON

shall consider only three phases: duty at the Naval Academy, in the Navy Department, and in the fleet.

Sampson entered the Naval Academy at the age of seventeen, coming from Palmyra, New York. He was at the time a raw country lad, and he had passed his boyhood in direst poverty, his parents having come from Ireland only four years before his birth. Yet there was something in him that almost at once caught the attention of Mahan, who was then a first classman. Mahan, being the second captain of the gun to which the new "plebe" was assigned, messed and drilled with him. Years afterwards when Mahan had forgotten others, he vividly recalled Sampson, who, without any aggressive self-assertion, showed an "unusual inquisitive interest" in all that was going on. When Sampson graduated four years later he was the cadet adjutant of the battalion and had the highest standing in the class. He was given special commendation for proficiency in physics and engineering.

A year after graduation he returned for duty at the academy (temporarily transferred to Newport during the Civil War) to drill midshipmen and teach them gunnery. His next tour at the academy was two years after the war, when, during Admiral Porter's administration, he was detailed as assistant in the Department of Natural and Experimental Philosophy. Two years later he succeeded Professor Lockwood as head of that department.

In 1874 he returned to the same duty, though now the department had changed its name to Physics and Chemistry. By a strange coincidence another member of the academic board at this time was Commander Schley, head of the Department of Modern Languages. It is interesting to note that two men whom Sampson

drew early to his department were Munroe, an assistant at Harvard, who has since become known as an eminent chemist, and Michelson, an unknown ensign, later to win world renown as a physicist, the one who measured the diameter of Betelgeuse.

Sampson gave himself to his work in physics and chemistry as heartily as if these subjects were to occupy him for the rest of his life. Mahan has remarked that Sampson drew his inspiration from scientists like Lord Kelvin rather than from naval officers of the old time. And Professor Michelson observed to the author that in his opinion Sampson was the first naval officer to recognize the value of pure science, "value not primarily for its applications (to which education should not give a great deal of concern), but for its fundamental principles, for itself." In this he encountered some opposition from other officers.

In the instruction of midshipmen Sampson saw how lectures might be introduced to broaden the outlook and stimulate interest. In physics, according to Michelson, most of the recitations had previously been given over to a labored reproduction of Ganot's textbook on that subject, of which occasionally the midshipmen would know about as much as the instructor. Sampson, who had not known Michelson personally, had requested that he be assigned to his department because of his good record in physics when he was a midshipman. Evidently satisfied with his choice, he called upon him to lecture on optics. Michelson relates that it occurred to him that it would be interesting to show midshipmen the method employed in measuring the speed of light, and for the experiment he fixed up what he thought was a crude apparatus, spending ten dollars on it. To his surprise, as he went ahead, not only

was he able with this homemade apparatus to indicate the method, but he measured the speed of light more accurately than it had ever been measured before. It was this success that turned his thoughts to specialization in physics, and thus he discovered his field.

Dr. C. E. Munroe's story, related to the author, of his call to the academy is significant for the light it throws on Sampson as head of a department. He had not met Sampson until, on the latter's invitation, he went to Annapolis to look the ground over. At the conclusion of their interview Sampson remarked:

> You will receive your appointment as professor of chemistry. I am going to nominate you, but it is the Secretary who will make the appointment. Now I don't know you or any who do know you, but I am satisfied. But since it is the Secretary who does the appointing, won't you send to me statements from two or three of your prominent men at Harvard who can speak of your fitness.

As Munroe observed, "That was characteristic of Sampson; he settled everything right on the spot, silently, powerfully, efficiently."

Professor Munroe on assuming his new duties came to Sampson for instructions. They were extremely brief: "You take charge of chemistry." As he later learned, Sampson was keenly alive to all that was going on, but he left to the officer under him the task of working out the details. He never annoyed the subordinate by being fussy.

Professor Munroe continued at the academy for eleven years, that is, until 1885. In that year he had made up his mind he would leave to accept a promising college position; but Sampson, hearing that he was leaving, induced Munroe to go with him to his new

billet at the Torpedo Station, Newport. Here Munroe gave important assistance in the developing of smokeless powder.

During the period when Sampson was in charge of the Torpedo Station, the most important work for which he was directly responsible was the improvement of the detonators. Sometimes they would go off and sometimes they would not. There was to be an exhibition at which the Secretary of the Navy would be present; but even after careful preparation there was doubt whether the detonators would explode the mines. Whereupon Sampson called Munroe into consultation and told him that he wanted him to correct the defect. This Munroe did.

Sampson when head of the Department of Physics and Chemistry at the Naval Academy had seen what an important part electricity was destined to play on the warship of the future, and he gave emphasis to this in his lectures and experiments. He delivered a considerable number of the lectures himself and with unquestioned success, a fact which it is interesting to compare with the statement of his intimate friends, that when he came to fame he shrank with horror from making public addresses.

In 1886 Sampson, who had had nine or ten years of duty at the academy, returned for his fourth and last tour, this time as superintendent. One of the tests his administration early had to meet was that caused by hazing. Warning had been given to the cadets, as they were then called, so that ignorance was no excuse. When the old frigate *Constellation*, carrying the upper classes on their practice cruise, stopped at New London to take on board the new fourth class, the "youngsters" could not resist the temptation and began putting the

"plebes" through various ordeals, most of them playful rather than harsh in character. The law, however, was explicit and strictly forbade any such practices. Sampson, determined that the law should be enforced, at once stopped the practice cruise and ordered the *Constellation* to Annapolis. A series of courts-martial followed, and nine cadets were sentenced to dismissal. The President saw fit to lighten the penalty, changing it to a term of confinement on the *Santee*. This ended hazing during Sampson's superintendency.

His annual report of 1888 shows the size of the academy at this time. In October, 1887, there were 37 in the first class, 42 in the second class, 55 in the third class, and 98 in the fourth class, making a total of 232; in the following June this number had shrunk to 191, the fourth class having lost about 32 per cent of its members. At this time the academy grounds were extended to College Creek, some fifteen acres being added by purchase. Among changes that Sampson effected was that at the beginning of their last year at the academy a part of the class should be so instructed as to become officers of the line and the other to become engineer officers. He urged that the age for entrance should be from fifteen to eighteen and not from fifteen to twenty, as the law provided. For the practice cruise he wanted the most modern steam warship assigned, not an obsolete sailing vessel. Another change he recommended was that the course of six years (the last two years at sea) be reduced to four years; that is, that on graduation the class be commissioned ensigns. This, which is the rule today, was not adopted until 1912.

Sampson seems not to have come into close contact with a large number of the cadets, and even to many of

the officers he seemed cold and distant; but the few who knew him intimately had for him ardent admiration and strong loyalty. In the hours of recreation he was an indefatigable tennis player; in fact, one who was a cadet of this time and who since has been a chief of bureau rated him as the best tennis player at the academy.

Sampson as superintendent proved a disciplinarian exacting but kindly and a clear-sighted, bold, and efficient organizer. Park Benjamin remarks: "When Commander Sampson's tour of duty at the Naval Academy ended, there remained little for anyone else to do, save to keep the standard of efficiency unimpaired."

As we come to the second division of this sketch, Sampson's service in the Navy Department, it is to be noted at the outset that after Dahlgren's monumental service of the Civil War period ordnance had slumbered until the eighties. For lack of funds the navy had not been able to keep up with the immense developments abroad. Some of the smoothbores had been converted into rifled guns, and an excellent form of breech closure had been introduced. Otherwise the large guns were the same as those used twenty years before. We had not been building new ships; and the batteries of those in commission were composed in the main of smoothbore guns.

It was Captain Sicard, Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance from 1881 to 1890, who began the new order of things. Instead of conceding that conditions were hopeless, he set about educating private industries in every line of ordnance material—designing guns, writing specifications, and working out metallurgical requirements and tests. At this time the infant steel industries needed all the encouragement that could be given. An

important step was taken when he ordered construction to begin on a new gun factory at the Washington Navy Yard in 1887. Commander Folger, who succeeded him, carried on the important work. And, by a fortunate choice, from 1893 to 1897 this important billet was given to Sampson, who was somewhat prepared for it by brief tours of duty at the Torpedo Station and at the Gun Factory.

Mahan relates that when Sampson was informed that he was to be Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, recognizing the grave responsibilities about to devolve upon him and the importance of building on foundations already laid, he applied for duty as a subordinate in the bureau, even though the chief he was to succeed (Commander Folger) was much his junior. Folger, who took him, during the three months of his tutelage, to live in his own home, has left this interesting biographical note:

> We talked of little else than ordnance, its history, and present conditions, as far as we were acquainted with it. He read little but scientific works and periodicals. I do not recall ever seeing him read a novel, and he cared little for historical subjects or general reading. This side of his temperament and taste was often a source of regret to me, as it left us without resource in conversation after discussion of the shop.

Admiral Strauss, who, though only an ensign on duty in the bureau, was closely associated with Sampson, says that the two outstanding qualities his chief showed in the multitudinous problems which arose were intelligence and courage. He was keen in discerning a need or defect, and he was bold in taking enormous risks when sweeping changes which promised improvement were presented to him.

Mention has already been made of the development of smokeless powder. Other countries had preceded the United States in its adoption, but Sampson had the courage to hold off until he got just what he wanted. England had been using a nitroglycerin smokeless powder, but our officers saw that it was not altogether satisfactory. Sampson knew that, after a certain powder had been selected and guns had been built for it, a change in its composition might be fatal. So he waited until Commander Converse, Lieutenant Bernadou, and others had investigated and thoroughly tested the powder that promised to be the best. Then he gave orders to go ahead with its manufacture. In consequence its composition has never been changed.

Another question that came up concerned the kind of power to be used for operating the turrets in the new battleships. In the British Navy hydraulic power was used; but Strauss, who had been a year and a half in the bureau, wanted to use electricity and came forward with designs which he had worked out. With something of temerity, as he thought, the young officer suggested ordering the material for one of the four ships under construction so that the novel idea might be tested. This was in the latter part of 1894. Sampson corrected him in only one particular, and that was number. He told him to order the equipment not for one, but for all four ships. Such decision was characteristic of Sampson. It may be said in explanation that he was absolutely certain of the future of electricity; after a brief but sharp scrutiny he was persuaded of the correctness of the designs, and he wanted no delay in the building of the four ships.

Another new idea in battleship construction which was introduced at this time and for which also Strauss

was responsible was the superimposed turret. There had been much discussion as to where the smaller gun turrets should be placed. In the *Indiana* class they were placed two on each side with the 13-inch gun turrets forward and aft amidships; but this arrangement was not satisfactory, for the smaller guns could be used only on the side on which they were placed. Strauss, who was called into the conference, suggested putting the 8-inch turret on top of the 13-inch, thus doing away with two and permitting the same broadside fire; and he said he could work out an ammunition hoist that would prove practical. Sampson was at once struck by the idea: "Go ahead with your plans. That's what we'll recommend." Thus, on the initiative of an ensign, they began the superimposed-turret type. There was much opposition, but the *Kearsarge* and the *Kentucky* were built on this plan. In this way the United States led in a great structural improvement.

These are but a few isolated examples of the activities of the Bureau of Ordnance and its powerful chief in the four years previous to the Spanish-American War. Telescopic sights were adopted and installed, the United States being the first nation to try them. The first modern submarine in our navy, a Holland boat, was contracted for. Automobile torpedoes were developed, and progress was made in their manufacture. Hard-faced armor was developed, and immediately orders were given to experiment with and develop an armor-piercing projectile.

As Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, Sampson was a member of the Advisory Board and the Board of Construction. Thus he had much to do with the general design of the new battleships and cruisers, and he had entire responsibility for the batteries, the armor, the

turrets, and the barbettes on these ships. Furthermore, as W. H. Stayton, a graduate of the Naval Academy, writes, 95 per cent of the guns employed in the battle of Santiago, as well as a large part of those used at Manila Bay, were made under his direction: "From 1892 until the outbreak of the Spanish War every gun built for the navy was designed and constructed under the supervision of Admiral Sampson, and the large guns were all upon his personal design."

Important among Sampson's policies was the creation of large ammunition reserves—foresight that was amply justified when war came. He did this, as he explains in his report, "not only because at any moment an emergency may arise making them urgently necessary, but also to prevent the scattering of the skilled labor which has developed this manufacture, and keep occupied plants which were established solely to meet the government demands."

When a new drill book was to be written for the fleet, Sampson was directed to write it. Target practice became of the first importance, and under the new system rapidity as well as accuracy was required. It was as a result of this that at Santiago the rapid American fire swept the enemy decks and prevented the Spaniards from doing any careful shooting and inflicting injury in return.

The complete story of Sampson's life would include also the nonmilitary duty assigned to him: he was assistant superintendent at the Naval Observatory from 1882 to 1885, member of the International Prime Meridian and Time Conference in 1884, and delegate from the United States to the International Maritime Conference held in Washington in 1889. But the limits of this work urge that we now proceed to the third aspect

of Sampson's career, his service afloat. This began with the Civil War, in which he saw a fair share of fighting.

As executive officer of the monitor *Patapsco* in January, 1865, he had a harrowing experience when that vessel, ordered to clear the approaches to Charleston of torpedoes which the Confederates had planted, herself ran upon a mine and sank within fifteen seconds. Nearly 60 per cent of her complement were lost. The executive won commendation for his fearless and efficient handling of the situation. Mahan, who saw him the next morning, remarks, "He was as unaffectedly and without effort imperturbed as though nothing remarkable had occurred."

Sampson's three tours of sea service in the thirty years following the Civil War, on the European and Asiatic stations and in the Pacific, present an honorable record, but, coming as they did during the period of great naval inactivity, they present nothing distinctive. The year 1897 found him still a captain in grade and in command of the battleship *Iowa*. When the *Maine* was blown up in Havana harbor, Sampson was president of the court of inquiry ordered to investigate the cause of the explosion. And then, as war was seen to be inevitable, and there came the question of who should succeed Commodore Sicard in command of the North Atlantic Fleet, Secretary Long chose Sampson. A year earlier he had been offered the important post of Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, but he preferred sea duty. At the time of the war he was by no means senior officer on the navy list, but in Long's opinion he was superior to all others as an "accomplished, efficient, competent, all-round naval officer."

He still maintained his unmoved exterior, but there was no sluggishness in his conduct of the war. He

"believed in celerity," and fully two weeks before hostilities began he presented to the Department a plan for the bombardment and capture of Havana immediately on the declaration of war. Captain Chadwick, his chief of staff, like Sampson, felt certain of success. Chadwick afterwards remarked, "The intensity of disappointment brought him [Sampson] by the Navy Department's disapproval can only be understood by those who are acquainted with Sampson's unbending purpose when his will was once fixed." Instead, the Department issued orders for the immediate blockade of designated areas on the north and south coasts of Cuba.

News was cabled to the United States that Admiral Cervera, with cruisers representing the best of the Spanish Navy, had sailed on 29 April from the Cape Verde Islands. This was telegraphed from Washington to Key West and then brought to Sampson, with the blockading squadron off Havana, by the cruiser *Montgomery*. The Navy Department, believing that the Spaniards' destination must be the West Indies, sent ships from the merchant marine taken over as scouts to cruise off Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Porto Rico in order that they might bring back word of the first appearance of the Spaniards. Sampson conjectured that their first objective might be San Juan, Porto Rico, and he determined to seek them out there, reasoning that if he was mistaken in his surmise he should obtain on arrival information which would enable him to fall back upon Havana before the enemy could reach there.

His only error was in overestimating the speed of the Spanish fleet. Cervera had selected San Juan as the port where he would coal and take on supplies; but

hearing that Sampson was there expecting him, he turned far to the south and made for Curaçao. Sampson now had a difficult problem, for he must maintain a fairly strong force before Havana to prevent the elusive enemy from slipping in, and also he must deny him Cienfuegos or any other port that would give a close communication with Spanish headquarters at Havana.

On the 19th of May there came a report, soon verified, that Cervera had succeeded in making Cuba, entering, however, not one of the harbors to the west near Havana, but the deep bay far to the east at Santiago. Meanwhile Commodore Schley, with a group of fast and powerful cruisers known as the Flying Squadron, was lying off Cienfuegos, for some days certain that he had the Spaniards imprisoned there.

Cervera's fleet, weak though it later proved to be, for a long time had the advantage possessed by any force of size which takes the offensive. For several weeks our whole Atlantic coast was in a state of apprehension lest the enemy might descend upon the unprotected harbors; and the army and the navy of the United States were forced to postpone operations in Cuba until they knew where the enemy would strike. With the inadequate means of communication which Sampson had it was nearly two weeks before he could collect his force off Santiago. But the Spaniards, having few places to which they wished to go and not deeming it safe to move, remained quiescent till escape was virtually impossible.

Fearful of a sortie and avoidance of battle on the part of the enemy, Sampson shortly after his arrival sent in the collier *Merrimac*, in charge of Naval Constructor Hobson with seven volunteers, to block the

narrow and winding channel leading from Santiago harbor. The fierce fire the *Merrimac* encountered from the shore batteries cut her steering gear so that she was sunk at a point where she could not fully accomplish the object. Nevertheless she made the passage more difficult, and the bravery of the little band of heroes electrified their comrades in the fleet. Happily they all were rescued by the Spaniards; and Cervera most chivalrously sent out a boat under a flag of truce to notify Sampson of their safety.

Sampson had already formulated a careful and effective plan of blockade, arranging his battleships and cruisers in a semicircle, none of them more than six miles from the entrance, and at night or in thick weather not more than four miles. Further, at night, the battleships in turn, each taking a two-hour watch, kept a searchlight trained on the entrance. This guarded the ships from the danger of torpedo attack from the harbor and was the factor chiefly instrumental in preventing the Spanish fleet from making an attempt to escape at night. Cervera afterwards remarked that they could not navigate the tortuous channel with the blinding flash in their eyes. Admiral Chadwick regarded Sampson's order relating to the use of searchlights as among the most important of the war.

Soon the army too was doing its part. On 22 June the advance of the invading forces under Major General Shafter was made at Daiquirí, fifteen miles east of Santiago; and on 1 and 2 July, after the spirited charges at El Caney and San Juan, they had pushed so far forward that they were almost on the edge of the city. Then even the Spanish defenders saw that the end might be a question of only a few days. General Blanco (who lately had been given the command of all Spanish

forces in Cuba, naval as well as military) on being informed of this ordered Admiral Cervera to leave Santiago. The latter knew that theirs was a forlorn hope, and that a battle could have only one result, with the sacrifice of hundreds of fine young Spaniards; but having explained this to Blanco and receiving only a confirmation of the previous order, he was too good an officer not to proceed to its execution.

It was on Sunday morning, 3 July, that the sortie was made. Admiral Sampson, on the flagship *New York*, was on his way to a conference with General Shafter at Siboney, a few miles to the east. At 9.35, when seven miles from the entrance to Santiago harbor, the admiral, who was on the quarter-deck, saw smoke, though not a Spanish ship was yet in sight. He delayed not a moment. Ordering the helm hard aport, he sounded the call to "general quarters."

Soon the *Maria Teresa* was seen heading out, and she was followed by the *Vizcaya*, the *Cristóbal Colón*, and the *Almirante Oquendo*. The *Brooklyn* flew the signal "Clear for action"; but the signal was not required, for ships had been cleared for action since the beginning of the war. Moreover, Sampson had gone over the general plan of action with his captains so carefully that everyone understood what was to be done as in a drill.

The rapid fire of the American fleet, concentrated on the Spanish flagship, the *Maria Teresa*, was overwhelming. Three quarters of an hour after the time she was first sighted she could stand it no longer and, turning, ran for the shore, a mass of flames. Five minutes later the *Oquendo* was beached in the same condition. At eleven o'clock the *Vizcaya* had reached the limit of her endurance and had turned for the shore. This left the

Colón the only survivor in the attempted flight westward; but as she was reputed to be the fastest ship of the two fleets and had gained a lead of six miles over the *Brooklyn* and the *Oregon*, she bade fair to escape. However, the *New York*, joining with the *Brooklyn*, the *Vixen*, the *Oregon*, and the *Texas*, held gamely on, the slower ships looking after the rescue of prisoners or returning on Sampson's signal to their stations. By the end of another hour it became evident that the *Colón* could not maintain her speed, and at one o'clock the *Oregon* dropped a 13-inch shell just ahead of her. Fifteen minutes later the *Colón*, though uninjured, fired a gun to leeward, lowered her colors, and ran ashore.

Not the least heroic work of the day on the part of the American sailors was the rescue of the Spanish crews. The former rowed boldly up to the shattered hulks, which were burning fiercely fore and aft; and though guns and ammunition piles were constantly exploding, and there was the danger that flames might reach the magazines, they went calmly ahead on their errand of mercy.

From the Spanish fleet 1813 prisoners were captured, including their admiral; the losses by gunfire and drowning were 264. This was Captain Chadwick's estimate, made when all figures were available, and was only a little more than half what the Spanish at first reported. In the American fleet one man was killed and one seriously wounded.

After the battle there came the unhappy controversy begun by certain ill-advised partisans who sought to gain an official statement from the Navy Department to the effect that Sampson was absent and was not in command at Santiago and therefore not entitled to

credit for the victory. Absurd though the contention was, it came before Congress and was the subject of a protracted investigation, which resulted emphatically in Sampson's favor; but it required a trenchant utterance from President Roosevelt to end it all. Secretary Long wrote as follows:

> He [Sampson] had been from the first, till after the victory was won, commander in chief in command. He was never out of signaling distance of his blockading fleet. He was on duty at the eastern end of the fighting line, and had Cervera gone that way, then by that chance he would have been universally acclaimed the foremost figure. Yet, as it was, the plan of battle was not changed; it was fought under his standing order unbroken. Before the smoke was over he had steamed along the whole battle line, firing as he went.

The battle of Santiago virtually ended the war. The Spanish military forces in the city capitulated thirteen days later, and on 12 August, 1898, a protocol was signed in Paris suspending further hostilities and leading directly to the treaty of peace between Spain and the United States.

Rarely has an officer been so thoroughly identified with a victory as was Sampson with Santiago. As one writer expressed this idea, Santiago was "the logical fruition of plans which his own genius had devised and set in motion; that is, it was won by officers whom he had drilled, on ships that he had constructed and armored, equipped with guns he had built."

As many have affirmed, Sampson avoided publicity and felt that he had no felicity in making an address. A year after Santiago, however, when he was presented a sword by the state of New Jersey, in referring to the battle he rose to real eloquence:

No man prepares himself for battle, and no one successfully enters it without first an effacement of self and selfish motives. In even the poorest soul is born in that hour the finest impulses that can adorn our human nature. High above all else we are thankful, for in the after hours of triumph or defeat is the sense that for once we have met our best selves face to face and seen exemplified in those about us the qualities we most strive for and most admire.

Sampson had his defects, and one commonly mentioned was that he did not know how to praise, or that he "withheld pats," as one of his intimate associates put it; and yet the officer who said this added immediately, as if to correct a wrong impression, "Unlike so many others he didn't slop over, but leaned the other way." The general opinion was that he was cold and reserved—qualities that are not likely to win an enthusiastic following. Yet, to those who really knew him, there was another side which among officers and enlisted men awakened ardent devotion. Admiral Strauss, who knew him as perhaps did no one else of our day, sums up his estimate in the brief characterization: "The most remarkable man I have ever known."

Sampson established a tradition in the navy as the great builder and organizer. This he did silently; and even at the grand climax he was as much in the background as is a dramatist at the initial performance of his play.

CHAPTER XIV

MAKERS OF TRADITION DURING THE WORLD WAR

IT WOULD be a false idea of the development of the United States Navy to think that the characters discussed in the preceding chapters were the only tradition makers. The tens and hundreds of officers loyally supporting them and the thousands of seamen faithfully following, obedient to the death, were absolutely indispensable in making the work of the great leaders possible and in building up the morale which is the very lifeblood of the Service.

This was recognized much more generally when history, advancing into the twentieth century, came to the World War. There had grown up a great national spirit in our country surpassing anything found before in the Western Hemisphere. The new navy—no longer the motley aggregation of old, of every speech and nation, the riffraff of the seaports, as well as the strong adventurous spirits—was now composed of American citizens. By this system (like that of the present day) recruits were quite as likely to come from Columbus or Chicago as from Baltimore or Boston; and many were the rejections because applicants failed to satisfy the exacting physical and moral requirements.

In the World War there developed a notable coöperation and coördination, teamwork such as had never existed before; and in the final award of honors rank

was almost entirely lost sight of. Indeed, the individual of the two branches of the Service memorialized beyond all others was the "Unknown Soldier," for in the great outburst of democratic feeling he represented the thousands who had borne the brunt and made the great sacrifice. What was true of the army was true of the navy; and these last pages therefore will be rather general, calling attention to the spirit that animated the whole and not dwelling at length on any one person.

War was declared against the Imperial German Government on 6 April, 1917. For years the navy had been making its preparations by keeping in a state of high efficiency such personnel and ships as appropriation had been made for; also by formulating detailed plans for an emergency, which showed how officers, men, destroyers, transports, colliers, oilships, etc. could all be multiplied without unnecessary delay or confusion.

Already the Navy Department had selected the officer to command American forces overseas. In realization of the inevitable drift of events Rear Admiral W. S. Sims, detailed for this duty, had started for England before the actual break occurred. As he steamed up the Mersey three days after the United States entered the war, he had its character impressed upon him, for his ship struck a mine laid by the artful enemy. The recommendations of Admiral Sims, made after frank and rather alarming discussions with the British Admiralty in London, formed the basic policy of our naval operations. Admiral Sims was remarkable in the way he coördinated the activities of the United States Navy and of the Royal Navy, and the large American force placed under him overseas felt the inspiration of a true leader. Alert, quick, fearless, and brilliant, he instilled into all his famous phrase, "Cheer up, and get

busy." He found the situation well-nigh desperate because of the ravages of the German submarines. To destroy the submarines and convoy the merchant vessels and troopships was the course he immediately urged upon the Department.

In Washington, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels worked early and late at his desk and was unusually successful in putting the needs of the navy before Congress and obtaining what he asked for. Closely associated with him was Admiral W. S. Benson, Chief of Operations, who controlled the detailing of vessels to their respective stations. And then there were the chiefs of the several bureaus. All performed their duties efficiently. Conspicuous among them were Rear Admiral L. C. Palmer, who provided for the recruiting and training of officers and men (there were 85,061 available at the outbreak of hostilities, and this number grew to 532,503); Rear Admiral Ralph Earle, who had an equally large task in furnishing guns, powder, shells, torpedoes, mines, and other munitions; Rear Admiral R. S. Griffin, who mobilized his forces for the upkeep of the machinery of the old ships, suddenly subjected to unusual strains, and for supplying the machinery of new ships soon being laid down in every yard; Rear Admiral David Taylor, who had the duty not only of providing for the rapid construction of destroyers and various auxiliaries but also of converting vessels of peaceful character into war craft; and Rear Admiral Samuel McGowan, who furnished supplies for the enormously increased personnel.

Long before we entered the war American merchantmen had been suffering from the attacks of the dreaded German U-boats. At length it was decided to assist our merchant seamen by placing a navy gun and gun

crew on board each of several ships. This, though affording only partial protection, served as a deterrent to the under-water craft.

One of the most spirited of the engagements between the merchantmen and the U-boats was that in which the crew of the American steamer *J. L. Luckenbach* were the heroes. It took place in October, six months after our entrance into the war. Early in the morning, as the *Luckenbach* was plowing her way toward St. Nazaire, France, she received without warning a shot from an innocent-looking sailing vessel — a U-boat in disguise. She promptly replied with her two 4-inch guns. A gun duel then followed in which the steamer was at a disadvantage, for the submarine, outranging her, remained at a distance where she was comparatively safe. The steamer had her after gun put out of action, her engine room damaged, and nine of the gun crew wounded; but her S.O.S. radio had reached the destroyer *Nicholson,* on patrol duty some ninety miles away. The destroyer radioed "Do not surrender," to which the merchant skipper replied "Never." For four long hours the fight continued; and when the rescuers arrived, the *Luckenbach* was still firing her one lone gun.

Such occurrences showed the courage and dogged determination of the merchant marine as well as of the regular Service.

The first of our naval vessels to join battle with the submarines were the destroyers. The war was not three weeks old when six of our most powerful craft of this type, leaving Boston, steamed eastward. Gales and heavy rains accompanied them, but bright sunshine greeted them as they entered picturesque Queenstown harbor. Their arrival has been called "the return of the

Mayflower." An Irishwoman is said to have exclaimed, "Sure, an' it 's our own byes comin' back to us." Battered by the heavy weather, some with condensers leaking and fire room ventilators carried away, the flotilla seemed to need an opportunity for rest and repairs; but the commanding officers were desirous of anything but being laid up in a yard. The following conversation occurred as they called to pay their respects to Admiral Bayly, the commanding chief of the British forces, with headquarters at Queenstown:

After acknowledging the introduction, Bayly's first words were these: "Captain Taussig, at what time will your vessels be ready for the sea?" Taussig replied, "I shall be ready when fueled." The admiral then asked, "Do you require any repairs?" (Meaning dockyard work.) Taussig answered, "No, sir." The admiral's third and last question was, "Do you require any stores?" (Meaning dry provisions.) Taussig answered, "No, sir! Each vessel now has on board sufficient stores to last for seventy days." The admiral concluded the interview with these instructions: "You will take four days' rest. Good morning."

The officer relating the conversation adds:

After this occurrence I saw a great deal of the admiral, and about a year and a half ago I visited him for a week in Devon. I know from what he has said to me on these various occasions that he was as much impressed with Taussig's straight answers as Taussig was impressed by the business-like aspect of the interview.

During the week preceding the arrival of the destroyers the destruction of merchant shipping by German submarines had reached the appalling figure of two hundred and forty thousand tons, the high point. But the first six destroyers were followed by others,

equally eager to make the hunting-grounds of the Germans unsafe for them. Still more came to base on Brest, until the total number reached eighty-five. The British destroyers, relieved from duty to the west of the British Isles when this was taken over by the Americans, were enabled to strengthen their North Sea and Channel patrols.

The most difficult feature of the game was to locate the foe. Our destroyers rushed to answer S.O.S. calls, drive off the enemy, and rescue survivors. On the sinking of the *Orama*, October, 1917, the *Jacob Jones* and the *Conyngham* saved all on board, four hundred and seventy-eight persons. This duty during the long winter nights of 1917–1918 was hard indeed. Convoy guard meant being almost constantly at sea, ever on the alert, with steam up, ready for an instant spurt.

The most successful encounter of the destroyers occurred in November, 1917. They had been escorting a big merchant convoy out through the mine gates, and had formed it in order for its perilous crossing to the west. Suddenly the destroyer *Fanning*, catching a glimpse of a periscope, turned sharply and headed for it. On passing where she had seen the supposed enemy, she dropped depth charges, which exploded. The *Nicholson*, following hard after her, extended the depth-charge barrage. At first it was thought that this would be like a dozen previous occurrences of this character, that it would serve only to drive away the enemy. However, the explosions had found their mark: a U-boat conning tower emerged, its hatch was flung open, and an officer appeared throwing up his hands as a sign of surrender. The shock of the exploding depth charges had wrecked motors, broken oil leads, and put diving-rudders out of commission. The crew were all

taken off; but the *U-58* sank, her sea cocks having been opened before the Germans left the vessel.

Not always were destroyers so fortunate. One afternoon the *Cassin*, patrolling off the Irish coast, sighted a submarine which quickly submerged. Later the vigilant lookouts on the destroyer saw a wake of bubbles headed their way — a torpedo. Full speed and hard left rudder went the *Cassin*, but in vain. The torpedo, running erratically,— sometimes on the surface, sometimes beneath, — occasionally porpoising, ever drew toward the stern. Gunner's Mate O. K. Ingram, sensing the danger, rushed aft and threw overboard as many of the depth charges stowed there as he could. He saw that an explosion of these following the torpedo hit might utterly wreck the *Cassin*. The torpedo found its target, —the destroyer's stern, — detonated, set off the depth charges still on board, killed Ingram, smashed the rudder, put the starboard engine out of commission, and extinguished all lights. The ship remained afloat because of the personnel's training and discipline; even the men in the after compartment, though blinded and dazed by the explosion, did not neglect to close the water-tight doors instantly. Later the officers and crew, working frenziedly to save their ship, were not too much occupied to detect the U-boat rising to view her work. At once they dropped shells from their 4-inch guns close aboard their foe, and she promptly submerged, not to appear again that day. A storm breaking, a wild night followed. At dusk the destroyer *Porter* had come to assist, joined shortly by two British vessels. At 2.30 A.M. a hawser was at last made fast, only to part an hour later. Morning had broken and the day was well advanced before the *Cassin* was successfully in tow and her safety assured.

Quickly to increase the forces hunting the submarines, pleasure yachts were donated or purchased. Among these were the *Norma*, the *Corsair*, the *Alcedo*, and the *Aphrodite*. Of these the *Alcedo* fell a victim of the U-boat. Many thought the smooth-weather yachts would not even reach France, but Rear Admiral N. A. McCully in the yacht *May* led them across to do patrol duty off Brest and Gibraltar. Their long voyage in heavy weather was dangerous enough, for decks were constantly awash, and for days at a time men were kept below. But this was only the beginning of their ordeal; with coast-guard cutters, gunboats, subchasers, and older destroyers, brought from the Philippines, they held resolutely to their task in all kinds of weather.

In May, 1918, the yacht *Christabel*, the smallest of the converted yachts operating in French waters, while on escort duty off the Île d'Yeu, sighted a periscope and, heading for it, dropped two depth charges. In consequence, as was learned later, the *UC-56* was so damaged that she had to be interned in a Spanish port.

One of America's signal contributions to the winning of the war was the establishment and maintenance of the convoy system. Mention has been made of the terrible toll the U-boats were exacting from the merchant ships before our participation in the war. Upon declaration of war Washington realized that immediate assistance must be given by forwarding munitions and supplies; and soon France and England urged that great gain would result if American troops could be seen at the front in the firing lines. It was felt that the psychological effect on the wearied Allied armies would be worth more than the addition of a whole division. On the Navy Department devolved the responsibility of forwarding men and supplies without loss. It was

the convoy system which, more than anything else, nullified the deadly work of the submarines, on which the Germans had counted to win the war.

A convoy comprised from sixteen to twenty merchant vessels, cargo ships, or transports sailing under the escort of cruisers, destroyers, gunboats, or yachts. The danger of attack from submarines was commonly confined to the waters within a few hundred miles of Europe; so by prearrangement convoy and escort met at a rendezvous (constantly changed to avoid the enemy) four or five hundred miles out at sea, and whenever a submarine was sighted, which happened rarely, a destroyer dashed at top speed for it, letting go the terrible depth charges. The extreme vigilance of the escorts gave the crews of the U-boats an evident distaste for encounters of this kind.

Under cover of a dense fog prevailing on the Hudson and New York Bay, in June, 1917, our first troop convoy, accompanied by the escort and commanded by Rear Admiral Albert Gleaves, left for France. The ex-German raider *Prince Eitel Friedrich*, rechristened the *DeKalb*, was one of the transports, carrying 10,000 troops, among them a picked regiment of marines. U-boats gave the convoy several scares on the way, but worked no damage. Steaming into the Loire, rich in its associations of Paul Jones and our infant navy, the convoy proceeded up to St. Nazaire, where the troops disembarked. This was but the forerunner of many that were to follow—convoys of such size that by the close of the war they were carrying troops to France at the rate of 10,000 each day. Before the armistice 2,079,880 American troops had crossed from the United States to France; and, despite the fact that prior to the war the navy had almost no transport service,

it carried 911,047 soldiers out of the 952,581 who traveled in American ships, besides safeguarding the passage of all.

Not one soldier lost his life, because of submarines, in ships with American escort on the way to France. How in the face of a desperate foe was such a record established? Mention has already been made of the vigilance of the escorts, but success was equally due to the skill with which the convoys were directed.

The convoys were operated from various centers, the most important, Brest, being under the able direction of Admiral Henry B. Wilson. Here, in a secret office where only very few officers were admitted, the movements of every convoy were constantly plotted on a huge chart, and every submarine reported also was marked. The speed, course, and habits of the various U-boats were closely studied; and as, rather regularly in the early hours of the evening, the U-boats opened up with their radio, making a daily report to the German station at Nauen, operators at various points on the French coast caught the direction from which each message came and, by the simple method of triangulation, established the position of the sender. This, and a circle surrounding it, the American naval officer having charge of operations at Brest secretly marked as a danger zone, and by radioing instructions to the escorts and often changing the courses of the convoys he commonly saved them from even a glimpse of their subtle foe.

On the return voyage, when the transports were empty, the lack of destroyers and the need of economizing time often compelled our forces to take risks; and then it was that the few successes of the U-boats were gained. Thus the *Mt. Vernon* was torpedoed, but she was kept afloat by the bravery of her fireroom force and

the skill of her commanding officer, Captain D. E. Dismukes. With four of her eight boiler rooms flooded she steamed two hundred and fifty miles back into Brest.

The best story of the war by an American naval officer is the simple narrative of Lieutenant E. V. Isaacs, first lieutenant of the *President Lincoln*, who describes his experiences after the torpedoing of that vessel en route to the United States. He was recognized and taken out of the boats by the *U-90*, who had accomplished the deed, and carried into Wilhelmshaven. On the way he gathered information of importance, and inspired by the hope that this might help materially to curb the German naval operations, he determined to escape. His first opportunity came when, after three weeks at the Karlsruhe prison camp, he was sent by rail to Villingen. Seizing an opportunity when the guards had relaxed their attention, in spite of the fact that the train was running at high speed he leaped out of a car window. Being injured and somewhat stunned by the fall, he was recaptured by his German guards, who beat him cruelly with their rifle butts. At Villingen, however, he short-circuited the lights on a dark night and leaped over the high wire inclosure. He then made his way through rough and mountainous country to the Rhine, traveling chiefly at night and hiding through the day. At the frontier, crawling and swimming, he managed to elude the numerous sentries and patrols and thus reached Switzerland and liberty.

The United States Navy found another opportunity for service of the first importance in the reënforcement of the Grand Fleet; this was needed so that when certain capital ships were laid up for repairs, and a squadron was detached for special duty, there would still be available a force equal to any emergency.

On the 6th of December, 1917, at Scapa Flow in the Orkneys, British and American battleships joined forces. Here our navy came to know the cold, dreary anchorage where the Royal Navy had based month after month, in readiness to give instant battle to the German Fleet.

Organized as the Sixth Battle Squadron of the Grand Fleet, our dreadnaughts put to sea but three days after their arrival, expecting to engage the enemy in battle. The report ran, "German force at sea; objective the Norwegian convoy"; but the foe was not to be found. Again and again it happened that the big ships, in perfect order, often in the dead of night, would steam out by the Calf of Flotta, through the Hoxa Gate, past the Lother Rocks, and near the Pentland Skerries, dark, misty, and forbidding, with dangerous currents eddying and swirling about them—all in the vain hope of meeting a worthy foe. At such times the crews would be excited and happy at the prospect of real work. But perhaps they were too prompt and cheerful; the game certainly was wary, and the crews returned heavy with disappointment.

On one of the frequent patrols, as, in the late afternoon, the fleet steamed out from Rosyth near Edinburgh, it promptly ran into a blinding snowstorm. The *Delaware*, Captain A. H. Scales, at the extreme rear of the column of capital ships, lost touch with the others because the fog buoy which trailed behind the ship she was to follow, and which was to guide her when nothing else could be seen, had carried away. As usual no lights were permitted; and when night came on, there was nothing to do but follow sailing-orders, which included two right-angle turns. With dawn the weather cleared; and to the surprise of the commanding officer of the *Delaware* he discovered his ship steaming half a

ARRIVAL OF THE AMERICAN BATTLESHIPS AT SCAPA FLOW

From the painting by Gribble

mile ahead of the British admiral (Lord Beatty). During the night he had steamed through the entire Grand Fleet without so much as sighting a single ship. So unexpected was his appearance in the morning that Admiral Beatty promptly demanded the recognition signal.

The life of the ships' companies was rough and exacting. There was strenuous and unremitting training, and regular gunnery practice, with the light guns inside at Scapa and with the heavy guns in the Firth of Forth. What made the duty especially severe was the fact that the ordinary relief gained through leave or change of scene could not be granted. The vessels had to be kept ready for full speed upon from one to four hours' notice. They must keep full of coal; and this meant coaling almost weekly. Only screened lights were permitted at night, and the night in December and January at this desolate northern base lasted eighteen hours. To keep up the morale of the men various entertainments were devised, such as boxing bouts, minstrel shows, and theatrical performances, the latter being given on an English ship which had been fitted up with a stage and adapted to purposes of amusement. Furthermore, the men were often allowed an hour or two on shore and afforded the opportunity for short walks. Occasionally the base of the Grand Fleet would be shifted to Rosyth in the Firth of Forth. This was a welcome change, for a few hours of liberty in the city of Edinburgh were then possible.

It was necessary for the American battleships, on being merged into the Grand Fleet, at once to change to the British system of tactics and to adopt their signals and radio books. This they did with such rapidity and effectiveness as to win favorable comment

from the British admiral. In order to hasten this process of amalgamation an American ship in the beginning was paired off with a British ship, and in practicing the evolutions the latter made it her especial duty to look out for the newcomer. But in a short time instruction was no longer required; and then the Sixth Battle Squadron, composed entirely of American battleships under the command of Rear Admiral Hugh Rodman, U. S. Navy, was put on exactly the same footing as the other squadrons. Indeed, when the Sixth Battle Squadron was sent out on convoy or other special duty, the American admiral commanded not only the battleships which he had taken overseas but also the British cruiser and destroyer escort attending them. Americans and British alike commented on the spirit of courtesy, cordiality, and comradeship that characterized the two navies.

The cherished ambition of the German U-boats had long been to sink an American dreadnaught. The *Florida* and the *Delaware*, awaiting a convoy near the Norwegian coast, avoided six torpedoes only by quick and skillful maneuvering. On the other hand the *Texas* and the *Arkansas* both tried their gun pointers' skill against periscopes. The *New York*, steaming to Rosyth, avoided three well-aimed torpedoes. At another time, while leading the column into Scapa Flow, she struck a submarine with her propeller, probably ending the career of the U-boat.

British submarines had been used effectively against the German under-water craft. So, as America wished to lend aid of every kind, about the time that the battleships had their stormy passage to the theater of operations a flotilla of American submarines set out for Queenstown via the Azores. These little craft, of a type never designed for long cruises, labored painfully

in gales that at times approached the intensity of a hurricane, but eventually they reached their destination. Then followed a short period of training from British submarine experts, after which the seven AL-boats, as they were called, went out to their regular eight-day patrols in St. George's Channel and in the entrance to the English Channel.

This kind of warfare at first seemed a game wherein the blind was to hunt the blind. But since the Germans, intent on sinking cargo or troop ships, had to spend the greater part of their time cruising on the surface, where they could see better and save their storage batteries—their sole dependence when submerged—they were liable to surprise; for the Allied submarine, playing the waiting game, remained submerged during the day and, with her periscope, watched for the enemy. Of course this imposed harder duty on the British and American crews. An eight-day patrol was exhausting even to the most robust.

The result of this type of anti-submarine activities, however, justified the effort and the great hazard. One hundred Allied submarines found twenty victims, while five hundred destroyers were officially credited with but thirty-four.

Though the seven AL-boats operating from Berehaven, Ireland, were unsuccessful in capturing or torpedoing a German U-boat, they were an important aid in the anti-submarine campaign; their presence made the enemy more wary, and soon, to a large extent, drove him farther out to sea where he was less effective.

One of the mysterious occurrences of the war was that which befell the *AL-2* when indirectly she accomplished the destruction of a German submarine. It happened while she was returning to Berehaven near

the close of an eight-day patrol. Running on the surface she had somewhat changed her course because one of the lookouts a few minutes before had announced that in the distance he had seen a doubtful object, perhaps wreckage or perhaps something more interesting. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, the officer on the bridge detected a periscope sixty yards distant and at the same instant felt the shock of a terrific explosion. The commanding officer of the *AL-2*, without waiting to see if his vessel had been damaged, gave orders for a quick dive and, circling about, attempted to ram his foe. He passed near enough to hear the whirring of the propellers of a craft. If the latter, as was thought, had dived to avoid the aggressive little *AL-2*, she dived to her doom. Several weeks later the British Admiralty, learning through intelligence sources that the *UB-65*, operating in this vicinity on the same day, had never been heard of again, credited the *AL-2* with her destruction. The supposition is that the German, seeing the *AL-2* during the stormy afternoon silhouetted against a bright western sky, attempted to torpedo her, but the torpedo either boomeranged or exploded prematurely.

The smallest naval craft of the war, especially designed to meet some of the emergencies, were subchasers, 110-foot gasoline boats. Stanchly built, each armed with a 3-inch gun, a depth-charge projector, or Y-gun, and equipped with listening devices, these little craft proved of decided value; but life on them was more uncomfortable than even crews that served on destroyers could realize. Two hundred of them reached the front, where they were to be found at Plymouth, Queenstown, Brest, Gibraltar, Corfu, and even Murmansk in the Arctic.

Their most spectacular adventure was what is known as the Durazzo affair. This city, near the Strait of Otranto, the Austrians and Germans had made important as a base, and from it they were sending out U-boats, which found a lucrative hunting-ground in the Mediterranean. It was so important that the Allied Otranto patrol decided it must be attacked and virtually destroyed.

Captain C. P. Nelson with twelve subchasers took a lively part in the action. After a conference with the British Commodore Kelly, commanding the forces in the raid, he told his officers, "It 's going to be a real party, boys." And events justified his promise.

On 9 October, 1918, the attack was made. Our subchasers, arriving off the port first, circled about, while British and Italian cruisers began a bombardment. The return fire from forts dropped close to our vessels but did not frighten them. Austrian submarines came out to attack the bombarding cruisers. Our subchasers, dropping depth charges, sank two, as oil and steel plates blown high in the air proved. Austrian destroyers refused to come out. Thus the cruisers, screened by our brave little craft, ruined Durazzo's usefulness as a base.

Our sailors of the air were exceedingly few in number at the time the call came for active service overseas. Aviation being an entirely new branch in the navy, they had to make their own traditions. Fortunately Yale students had been training under Trubee Davison from early in 1916. They were ready when war came; and this Yale unit proved invaluable in the work of the regular navy. Strangely enough the naval air service was the first of American armed forces to land in France, seven officers and one hundred and twenty-

two men arriving at Pauillac and St. Nazaire on the 5th and 9th of June, 1917, respectively; and it was not long before our aviators were doing patrol duty, protecting convoys, and bombing submarines. Ireland, England, France, and even Italy grew familiar with planes having the red, white, and blue device. To quote figures, our naval forces in the war zone under Captains H. I. Cone and T. T. Craven had forty-four stations and made more than fifty-six hundred war flights.

There was seldom a lack of adventure for the aviators. Toward the end of April, 1918, two planes left the Île Tudy station for escort duty. They met the convoy off Penmarch. Twenty lumbering cargo tramps made a tempting target for an enterprising U-boat, and it was not long before the planes sighted the bubbles that indicated the course of a submarine. Flying low and aiming at an oil patch on the water, they dropped their bombs, at the same time radioing a destroyer, which supplemented their attack with depth charges. The submarine involved in the affair, never having returned, was officially counted as lost. Our airships are credited with another success when a U-boat which had battled with a plane, showering her with shrapnel, had her career ended by being bombed by four airships which appeared unexpectedly.

Our navy aviators worked also over the land, taking their part in raids on aërodromes and bases, such as Ostend, Bruges, Zeebrugge, and Pola; and many are the thrilling stories of their exploits on both sea and land.

In a combat with Austrian planes Ensign C. H. Hammon, having driven off the enemy, landed on a choppy sea, picked up Ensign G. H. Ludlow from his sinking plane, and got away to safety as Austrian

destroyers and seaplanes arrived to finish off their game. Lieutenant D. S. Ingalls, by shooting down a German plane after a running fight, became our first naval "ace." Lieutenant Commander A. L. Gates won a Congressional Medal of Honor by rescuing the crew of a British plane wrecked near Ostend and close under the German defenses.

Yet another effective method of battling with the submarines, one that brought terror to the sternest German crew, was the laying of a mine barrage. The British early had attempted to close the passage from the North Sea to the English Channel and beyond by laying mines and setting huge steel nets in the Strait of Dover. To block the way for submarines was extremely difficult because of strong currents, shifting sands, and violent storms. Nevertheless the British persevered and made the Channel so dangerous that the Germans gradually abandoned the short passage by Dover and chose the longer and safer route to the Atlantic by steaming to the north, passing between the Orkney and Shetland Islands, and coming south along the coast of Ireland.

The ambitious project entertained by our navy was to block this northern passage so that submarines based at Cuxhaven, Wilhelmshaven, and Helgoland, and smaller ones at Bruges, Zeebrugge, and Ostend, would find the waters too dangerous to pass. Mines appeared the only practicable weapon, and as those used in the Strait of Dover were unsuited to the conditions, others that were adapted had to be designed and built.

The Bureau of Ordnance only nine days after we entered the war came forward with a proposition that was staggering in its magnitude. It called for the mining of the two hundred and thirty miles of the foggy and

stormy North Sea between the Orkneys and Norway, where the water reaches a depth of eleven hundred feet. To accomplish this the bureau set about developing a new mine-firing mechanism, new mine anchors, and new methods of planting mines; at the same time it organized factories that would insure quantity production on a vast scale, and it made plans for securing and fitting out a squadron of mine-laying vessels.

A new and altogether superior type of mine was produced through the able efforts of Commander S. P. Fullinwider, Lieutenant Commander T. S. Wilkinson, and Mr. Ralph A. Browne. This made the passage of a mined area dangerous to a submarine cruising either on the surface or as far underneath as two hundred and forty feet. Mine anchors were developed in consultation with British mining experts so that they could be used in ships of their navy as well as of our own, for both services were to participate in the laying of the mine field. The mines and anchors were designed to drop over the stern of the layer as a single mechanism, a requirement essential for rapid planting. Producing the huge quantity of mines on schedule time—12,805 mines was the monthly output reached—required the coördination of five hundred and forty manufacturing firms, the development of a new high explosive, and the erection of a large mine loading-plant at St. Julien's Creek, Virginia. To supply the mine layers mine bases were established at Invergordon and Inverness, Scotland.

Captain R. R. Belknap organized the mine squadron, consisting of two mine layers already in existence and six converted steamers. The whole operation overseas was placed under the command of Rear Admiral Joseph Strauss.

The actual mine-laying began 8 June, 1918, when forty-seven miles of these "pills of perdition," as they were called, were laid by the American squadron. This was followed by twelve mine-laying operations, during which the vessels were screened by British destroyers and the battle fleet.

The barrage comprised a total of 70,263 mines, of which 56,611 were laid by the American Mining Squadron. Extending from Udshire Light, at the entrance to Bergen Fiord, to the Orkneys, it was fifteen to thirty-five miles in breadth, forming a treacherous area of water, the passage of which was a desperate venture. A submarine if running on the surface would be in danger for from one to three hours; if submerged, twice that time.

On 8 July it was learned that the barrage had taken its first toll. A U-boat, putting into one of the Norwegian fiords, reported that it was disabled because of a mine exploding near it, and it was interned for the rest of the war. Submarines bound north or returning could be tracked by their radio communications caught by the Admiralty. When their radio messages stopped abruptly as they entered the barrage, the Allies had reason to believe that something had happened. From German records available since the war it is known that in attempting to pass through the barrage seventeen submarines were either lost or damaged so as to prevent their being used again.

The last type of naval activity in the war which we shall consider had nothing to do with the sea. In the terrific and often doubtful struggle waging on the Western Front the navy could not rest content unless it was doing all it could to help the army. Someone has remarked, "In all big wars, it has ever been the privi-

lege of the navy to land larger guns than those generally used ashore." The accuracy of this statement may be questioned, but it certainly is what happened in 1918. It chanced that construction had slowed down in the building of dreadnaughts, for the reason that all energies had been turned to the quick production of destroyers and other anti-submarine craft. In consequence several great ships' guns, powerful 14-inch 50-caliber cannon, were available. These with their enormous range, from 35,000 to 43,000 yards, were seen to be invaluable if they could be placed at strategic points on the Western Front.

The problem became one of designing and constructing mobile mounts for the huge navy guns. Railway artillery, employing heavy guns, was by no means a new idea, having been used in the Civil War as well as in this war; but nothing approaching what the navy now proposed had ever before been considered within the range of practicability.

Secretary Daniels heartily approved the proposal of the Bureau of Ordnance to design and build such mounts as were required and to send the guns manned by the navy wherever they were most needed. Two months later the intricate designs were completed, and the Baldwin Locomotive Works undertook the construction. A part of the problem was the distribution of the great weight of gun and mount, 535,000 pounds, in such a way as should allow the car to travel on French railroads. Twelve axles were found necessary, and precaution was taken to make the whole not so high nor so large that it might not pass through the tunnels met on the way. The first mount was completed in seventy-two days; or in one hundred and twenty days from the time that the design was begun a 14-inch 50-caliber

naval gun was ready on a mobile railway mounting—a record in speed, one of the best of the war. All together the navy prepared five such guns, in five battery units of fourteen cars each.

The resourcefulness of naval personnel was taxed to the utmost to assemble the batteries after their arrival in France, at the city of St. Nazaire. Blue prints did not arrive, rivets turned out to be useless stove bolts, facilities for handling heavy weights proved inadequate — these were but some of the unforeseen difficulties encountered.

On the 17th of August, 1918, the first mounted naval battery was moving toward the firing line. Paris had been bombarded from a distance of 68.8 miles by a 9-inch German gun. Consequently our first gun was hastened to a point from which its shells could silence this menace. Rather than risk its destruction the Germans removed their so-called "Big Bertha" from its fixed emplacement and never again used it to annoy the French capital.

The naval batteries quickly found their work: two guns with the French army at Tergnier, Rethondes, Fontenoy, and Soissons, and three with our army at Charmey, Thionville, Verdun, Champenaux, and Lunéville. By their fire the German railway lines were disrupted, especially at their most important junctions of Montmédy, Longuyon, and Conflans; and ammunition dumps supposed to be immune from damage were destroyed in the areas well back of the firing lines. Thus the navy did its part and, coöperating with the army, compelled the Germans to seek an armistice if they were to save themselves from complete disaster.

CHAPTER XV

MAKERS OF TRADITION OF OUR DAY

THE WORLD WAR over, there was no more danger from German submarines. The laborious tasks of the naval patrols and the escorts were ended, but not the duty of those responsible for the transportation of troops. The latter, indeed, was even less than half completed. Two million American soldiers were in France, eager to return home; and since the British and other foreign ships that had taken large numbers to Europe were no longer available, it was incumbent upon the navy to provide for just so many more than they had taken over. The troops, all except a few thousand that could not be spared, were brought back within eleven months after the armistice. The return of nearly seven eighths of the total number was the work of the navy and was accomplished without the loss of a single life from the hazards of the sea.

A second post-war duty was the sweeping up of the mine fields. In order to make the seas again safe for navigation, it had been agreed that each nation should destroy the mines which it had planted. Thus the larger part of the Northern Mine Barrage again became the responsibility of the United States.

Eighty-two vessels and four thousand men were engaged in this work, and no small part of the force were reserves who had joined the navy for the war. The sweeping of the mines was even more hazardous

than their planting had been. Many explosions followed. In one the victim was the trawler *Richard Buckley*, with which Commander F. R. King of the regular navy and six of his crew were lost. Commander King, making every exertion to save his crew, remained to the last. Then it was too late to escape, and he was carried down with his ship.

In this perilous duty twenty-three ships were damaged and two officers and nine men lost their lives. On 30 September, 1919, however, the infested waters were again free from peril.

In May of that same year, in quite another field, the Service established a record when a United States Navy seaplane was the first to make a trans-Atlantic flight. The successful aviator was Lieutenant Commander Albert C. Read in the *NC-4*.

Three naval planes prepared for the flight; besides the *NC-4*, there were the *NC-1*, Lieutenant Commander P. N. L. Bellinger, and the *NC-3* (the flagship of the division), with Commander John H. Towers as the commodore. The plan was to fly from Rockaway, New York, their base, to Lisbon by the way of Newfoundland and the Azores, and from Lisbon to proceed to Plymouth, England. To direct the planes through the long night-flight which lay before them and to be ready for rescue in case of mishap, battleships and destroyers were stationed every seventy-five miles between Newfoundland and the Azores.

All went well until they neared the Azores, when they ran into a very thick fog. The *NC-4* succeeded in ascending above it, and fifteen hours and thirteen minutes after leaving Newfoundland arrived at Horta. The other two airships had not such good luck. The *NC-1* descended forty-five miles from the island of

Flores. Her complement were taken off by a passing steamer, which tried to tow the plane. Destroyers also came to the rescue, but the airship, pounded by the heavy seas, sank after a few hours. It was, however, the flagship *NC-3* that had the longest and most desperate struggle.

Commander Towers, learning from his engineer that fuel sufficient for only two hours remained, thought that on the sea he might take advantage of an occasional gleam to obtain an observation, and decided to alight. Only when he was so near the water that with speed reduced by shutting off power he found it impossible to rise did he discover the heavy sea running. The light craft, touching the top of a wave, slid down the face of the next with high velocity and struck the third a heavy blow. The ship was badly strained in every part and soon began to leak.

The sun, appearing for a moment, gave opportunity for a quick observation, which, with a bearing sent out from the U.S.S. *Columbia* and secured by radio, showed that they were thirty-four and one-half miles southwest of Fayal.

If now they could have taken the air again, as Towers had planned, their problem would have been solved, but the rough sea made this impossible.

The radio apparatus, which had been put out of order by the shock of alighting, had been repaired; but it was one thing to send out signals and quite another to gain attention. After trying intermittently for several hours to establish communications, the radio officer reported that all vessels in the vicinity were so busy exchanging messages over the safety of the crews of the *NC-1* and the *NC-4* that they were quite unconscious of any signals in the wave length of the third plane.

That afternoon, the wind becoming stronger, it was felt that to run the engines and to force the ship through the pounding waves would be only to invite disaster; so watches were set, and preparations were made to ride out the storm.

The wind, however, instead of subsiding became more violent, and on the following day had reached the fury of a gale, blowing sixty miles an hour. That morning the port wing-pontoon was carried away, and a watch had to be stationed on the starboard wing-tip in order to give it added weight and thus keep the port wing-tip clear of the water. Soon the high seas began to break the ribs of the lower plane and split the fabric. Also the hull was leaking badly and had to be pumped out.

It was a question how long the plane could endure the persistent straining; but by constant adjustment, tightening of wires and bolts, Commander Towers and his companions kept her afloat through another afternoon and night. In a further attempt to send out radio signals they were again unsuccessful; but, taking advantage of every lull in the waves, they worked toward San Miguel, which observations had shown was the nearest island.

On the third morning the wind abated slightly, and at 10.15 they had approached near enough to San Miguel to see land. Seven miles off the harbor of Ponta Delgada they were sighted by the American destroyer *Harding*, which came out at full speed to pick them up. The sea was still running high; but though they knew that their starboard pontoon was nearly done for, they refused assistance, determined to make port under their own power. The climax of mishaps came as they entered the harbor. A cross sea swept away the loose starboard pontoon, and this,

dragging along by its wires, suddenly turned the seaplane about and very nearly capsized it.

Cutting loose the wreckage, they taxied on to moorings, but they had to keep an officer ready on each side to run out on the wing in order to preserve equilibrium.

It was a fight of fifty-three hours from the time they alighted on the water to the time they reached port. On their arrival the town went wild with rejoicing. Ships in the harbor were dressed, and a salute of twenty-one guns — the number prescribed for the President — was fired by the Portuguese battery.

The *NC-4* was the only plane that could continue the voyage. Her skipper, Lieutenant Commander Read, made the flight to Lisbon without mishap and by the end of the month had reached Plymouth, completing a cruise of forty-five hundred miles in fifty-four flight-hours.

Service of quite a different kind was that in the Caribbean. In the Dominican Republic and Haiti the forces of the United States for years have induced peace and good order. In these countries Rear Admirals W. B. Caperton and Harry S. Knapp did pioneer work in administration and established the nucleus of good government. The influence of the navy was strongly felt in Nicaragua also. Similarly, in China, disturbed by political factions and civil war, the cruiser and gunboats comprising our Yangtze patrol not only protected American missionaries and business interests but helped people of every nationality. Officers engaged in this duty often had delicate questions to handle, but they lived up to the tradition of Kearny, Perry, and Shufeldt.

Conspicuous in the Far East, also, was the prompt assistance lent by the navy to Japan following the earthquake in September, 1923. When news was received

THE WRECKED *NC-3* SAFE AT PONTA DELGADA

of the terrible calamity in Tokyo and Yokohama, the services of the entire Asiatic Fleet in Chinese waters, commanded by Admiral E. A. Anderson, were placed at the disposal of the Japanese authorities. The destroyer division No. 38 with medical supplies was immediately dispatched, and its vessels were the first foreign naval ships to arrive on the scene. By the direction of the President, Admiral Anderson purchased such further supplies as seemed to be needed, and, loading the available ships with food, clothing, and medicines, he hurried them to the scene of the disaster. At Yokohama the medical officers established a hospital and treated hundreds of those who were suffering. In addition, the navy transported Red Cross officials, American citizens, and other foreigners between Japanese ports; they searched for and buried the American dead; they helped business firms to recover valuables and securities; they furnished water for American ships touching at Yokohama and for hospitals ashore; and they assisted in forwarding general medical assistance and supplies to Tokyo, Yokohama, and Kobe.

Distress and poverty were experienced everywhere after the World War, but in no quarter was need felt more sharply than in the Near East. There, in the carrying on of humanitarian work, the navy was a very active agent.

Affairs in Turkey and Greece were by no means settled when the larger powers had arranged terms of peace. And it seemed wise, since we had no ambassador at Constantinople, that Rear Admiral Mark L. Bristol, commanding United States naval forces in Turkish waters, should be appointed the High Commissioner of the United States. This was done in August, 1919; and for six years following he was on duty at Constan-

tinople — an evidence of the efficiency of his service. His duties were largely of a diplomatic character, for, being the senior United States representative in the Near East, he had charge of dealings with Turkey and other countries. Further, all other American officials, no matter what their department, were under him. Thus, in the years of southern Europe's greatest destitution, the American Red Cross, the Near East Relief, and the American Relief Administration, as well as many American commercial enterprises, looked to him for assistance. His influence was felt at the treaty-making conference at Lausanne in 1923, when for a long time Turkey and the powers of western Europe could not agree. Again, he had general direction of the humanitarian work in the rescue of tens of thousands of fugitives from southern Russia on the collapse of the Wrangel offensive against the Bolsheviks, also in the rescue of two hundred and sixty-two thousand Greeks and Armenians at the time of the defeat of the former in Asia Minor in 1922.

When it was seen that Smyrna was doomed,— for the Turks were following close on the heels of the defeated Greek army,— Admiral Bristol dispatched such destroyers as could be spared to look after American interests. A large section of the city was set on fire. The civilian population were panic-stricken; and, the problem growing in seriousness, at a conference attended by naval officers of several powers it was realized that hundreds of thousands of refugees must leave. The time limit set by the Turks was ten days. By the insistence of the American officers this was extended twice.

When the terror was at its height, Greeks and Armenians crowded the quays, overloading small boats

within reach and even throwing themselves into the water. The American destroyers rescued hundreds and hundreds and transported them to places of safety. Also patrols of our bluejackets, working tirelessly, went about on shore showing neither fear nor hostility in the face of thousands of victorious soldiers, calming the terror-stricken women and children, and escorting them to places where they could be cared for. Securing permission to dock ten empty Greek ships, in one day they took off thirty thousand refugees, 90 per cent of whom were women and children.

Ordinary seamen, some scarcely more than boys, as well as officers, showed most admirable spirit. A high American official wrote:

> The work of the bluejacket was varied, carrying a baby in his arms, or a cripple on his back, or acting as "hamal" (porter) for household goods. All this was a part of the day's work, and our sailors did it with an untiring cheerfulness and efficiency which reflected credit on the American manhood they typified.

Such work was accomplished, not only by the superior manhood, but through the fine discipline and organization intelligently directed. This was shown again a year later (16 December, 1923) in the Sea of Marmora.

The lookout on the U.S.S. *Bainbridge*, Commander W. Atlee Edwards, reporting a ship in the distance from which smoke was pouring, the destroyer went to her rescue. The unfortunate vessel, which was burning fiercely at her stern, proved to be the French military transport *Vinh-Long*, proceeding from Bizerta to Constantinople with families of French officers and a considerable cargo of ammunition intended for French warships.

Scarcely had the *Bainbridge* been made fast alongside and rescue work begun, when the flames reached the after magazine of the transport. The shock of the explosion tore loose the securing lines, and for several seconds a hail of wreckage and ammunition descended over a wide area. Again, however, the destroyer approached and made fast. A second explosion then followed; and this time the *Bainbridge* was blown a ship's length away. Then Commander Edwards realized that no time must be lost; but, instead of considering the possible danger to his command, he resorted to a desperate expedient. Ordering full speed ahead, he rammed the transport amidships and, with the bow of the destroyer tightly wedged in the hole which she had cut, proceeded to take off the passengers and crew.

Thus 482 out of 495 who had been on the transport were saved. Soon galley fires on the *Bainbridge* were going merrily, and hot food was prepared for the fugitives. Sea chests were opened and rifled for clothing. Officers and bluejackets turned to the glad task of feeding, clothing, and making comfortable the refugees.

There are traditions in the navy of the flaming sword, but those of the generous heart and the willing hand are no less true to its character.

On the conclusion of hostilities in 1918 there was the same feeling that has terminated every great struggle: Let us have no more war; and some argued that since there was to be no more war, the navy might be dismissed as an unnecessary luxury. Only once, at the close of the Revolution, was this idea carried out to the logical conclusion and every ship that had survived the conflict disposed of. However, history affords what may be considered a useful lesson: within less than a decade the need of protecting American interests from

the semicivilized Barbary pirates and from the highly civilized but revolutionary French had brought affairs so nearly to a crisis that Congress, regardless of expense, authorized the building of twice as many warships as had been sold.

The giant naval force of 1918 had to be cut down. The question of the point to which it could be reduced without endangering public safety was one for the people, acting through Congress, to decide. For the navy itself the problem to which the rank and file gave themselves was maintaining at its highest efficiency the force authorized.

Although laudation of the present must always be accepted with caution, certain of the somewhat recent developments are deserving of notice.

The navy has become year by year more closely associated with the rest of the country in industrial and commercial fields. This has been true in the development of steel plants, marine engines, radio service, electrical equipment, etc., and in the fostering of commercial enterprises in Central and South America, China, and the Near East. The Naval Academy has graduated not only superior officers but others who have rendered distinguished service in engineering and various other fields. Conspicuous among the latter is Mr. William Le Roy Emmet, widely known for his inventions in the development of the turbine.

The navy of today is organized as never before. Only since the World War have airships and submarines had a part, together with battleships, cruisers, and destroyers, in fleet operations. Completeness would demand more light cruisers, but the navy works with what it has. During the last thirty years this organization has included a constantly increasing number of

officers who have specialized in certain branches or subjects, and of men who have risen to higher ratings as electricians, engineers, radio telegraphers, machinists, carpenters, musicians, yeomen, and the like. One of the great benefits of enlistment in the navy, for the ambitious man, has been the opportunity for technical education.

The navy of today has become truly national. Only American citizens are enlisted. English is now the language of the crew, and not Swedish, Portuguese, German, and Italian. Like many American institutions it is young. Comparatively few are the men who have served even two enlistments. Though regret may be felt for the loss of the picturesque figures of the past, there is power in the fine, clean young men who are the bluejackets of our days.

It is a democratic navy. Discipline demands distinctions that go with rank; yet when the enlisted man knows that by application and industry, if he will take advantage of the educational courses offered, he may become a petty officer, a warrant officer, or even a commissioned officer, he is not likely to worry about class distinctions. Every year appointments to the Naval Academy are offered by the Secretary of the Navy to one hundred of the enlisted men who can meet the entrance requirements of that institution. In order to help the enlisted men who wish to take advantage of this opportunity, commanding officers excuse from routine work those who show signs of promise and place them in classes to study for the entrance examination.

Like other parts of our nation, the navy has felt the "call of the West." Not only has an increasing proportion of the personnel been drawn from the central and Western states, but the United States Fleet has been

divided, and the Pacific Fleet is certainly not less important than the Atlantic.

At no time more than in recent years has the navy emphasized its history and traditions. Much in every generation is transitory, and not all is noble. It is assuredly foolish to blind ourselves to imperfections. But there is no duty of citizenship more important than that of studying our past, determining what principles have been right and what work has been wise and substantial. Only as we recognize the firm foundations of the past can we labor confidently in the present and build intelligently for the future.

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